When Knights were Bold

TRUSTY SENTINELS

When Knights were Bold

By

Eva March Tappan

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PREFACE

This book is in no degree an attempt to relate the involved and intricate history of the Middle Ages. Its plan is, rather, to present pictures of the manner of life and habits of thought of the people who lived between the eighth and fifteenth centuries. Our writings and our everyday conversation are full of their phrases and of allusions to their ideas. Many of our thoughts and feelings and instincts, of our very follies and superstitions, have descended to us from them. To become better acquainted with them is to explain ourselves. In selecting from the enormous amount of material, I have sought to choose those customs which were most characteristic of the times and which have made the strongest impression upon the life of to-day, describing each custom when at its height, rather than tracing its development and history. I hope that the volume will be found sufficiently full to serve as a work of reference, and sufficiently interesting to win its way as a book of general reading.

Eva March Tappan

Worcester, Mass.

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When Knights were Bold

LEAVING THE CASTLE

WHEN KNIGHTS WERE BOLD

CHAPTER I

Page, Squire, and Knight

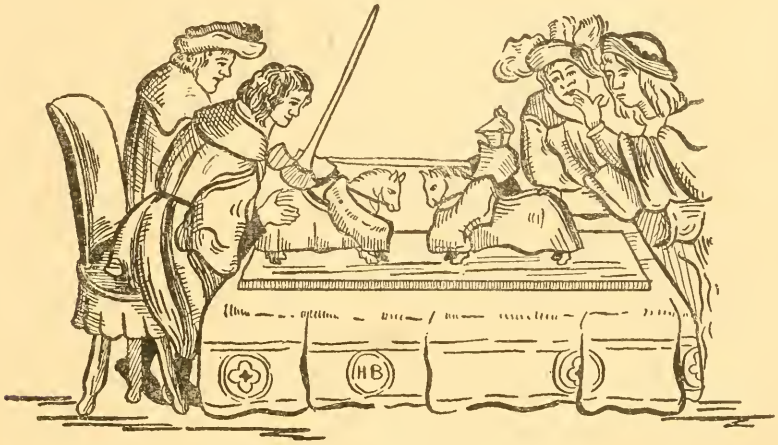
It must have been a sight well worth seeing when a knight mounted his horse and galloped away from a castle. Of course his armor was polished and shining, and, as Lowell says of Sir Launfal, he "made morn through the darksome gate." The children of the castle especially must have watched him with the greatest interest. The girls looked wistfully at the scarf or glove on his helmet, each one hoping that he who would some day wear her colors would be the bravest man that ever drew a sword. As for the boys, they could hardly wait for the day to come when they, too, could don glittering armor and sally forth into the world in quest of adventures.

Even the youngest of these children knew that a boy must pass through long years of training before he could become a knight. This began when he was a small child, perhaps not more than seven years old. It was not the custom for the son of a noble to be brought up in the

home of his father. He was sent for his education and training to the castle of some lord of higher rank or greater reputation, sometimes to the court of the king. He was taught to look with the utmost respect upon the man who trained him to be a knight, to reverence him as a father, and to behave toward him with humility and meekness. Even if the time ever came when they were fighting on opposite sides, the foster son must never harm the man whose castle had been his home. In those days of warfare and bloodshed, the king himself might well be glad to have as devoted supporters and friends a band of young men who had been carefully trained in the practice of arms. It is no wonder that kings and nobles looked upon it as a privilege to receive these boys into their castles. Indeed, when their fathers were inclined to keep them at home, the king sometimes demanded that they be sent to him.

The boys of the days of knighthood were not so very different from those of to-day, and many of their amusements were the same as now. They had various games of ball, they played marbles, they see-sawed, and walked on stilts, much as if they belonged to the twentieth century. Of course they played at being knights, just as boys to-day play at being merchants or manufacturers. There is an

old picture of some pages, as these boys were called, playing that two toy knights mounted on wooden horses are having a contest. The two horses are pushed toward each other, and if either knight is struck by the spear of the other and thrust out of his place he is vanquished.



PLAYING AT TOURNAMENTS

This was only play, and there were many things that a page must learn and learn thoroughly before he was fourteen or fifteen. How much of "book learning" was given him is not known. Probably the custom differed in different places. In most cases, it could not have been a great amount, perhaps only a little reading, and it seems to have been regarded as no disgrace to a knight if he did not even know his letters. He must learn to sing, however, and to

play his accompaniments on the harp; and he must play backgammon and chess, for these games were looked upon as accomplishments which no gentleman could be without. He was taught to say his prayers and to have respect for the Church and religion. It was especially impressed upon him that he must be "serviceable," that is, he must wait upon the ladies and lords of the castle. He must run on errands for them and he must do their bidding in all things, for it was an honor to him to be permitted to serve them. A page who was disobedient would have been scorned and despised by the other pages, for they all hoped to become knights, and no true knight would refuse to obey the commands of his lord or the gentler behests of his lady-love. Such a one would have been looked upon as no knight, indeed, but rather as a rude, boorish churl. The page, or valet or damoiseau or babee, as he was also called, must always be gentle and polite; for the knight was an ideal gentleman, and the gentleman must never fail in courtesy. There is a quaint little volume called "The Babees' Book" which tells just how a boy who wished to become a knight was expected to behave. When he entered the room of his lord, he must greet all modestly with a "God speed you," and he must kneel on one knee before his lord. If his lord spoke to

him, he must make an obeisance before answering. He must not lean against a post or handle things, but stand quietly, listen to what was said, and speak when he was spoken to. When the meal was prepared, he must bring water for hand-washing, presenting it first to his lord, and must hold a towel ready for him to use, a most desirable part of the preparation for a meal, as it was the custom for two persons to use the same trencher, or wooden plate, and forks were not in use. When the time came for the page himself to eat, he must not lean upon the table or soil the cloth or throw any bones upon the floor. If he chanced to use the same trencher with any one of higher rank than he, he must take meat from the trencher first, but he must be especially careful not to take the best piece.

Thus it was that the indoor life of the page passed. Most of his indoor teaching was given him by the ladies of the castle. It was they who taught him to choose a lady-love for whose sake he was to be ever brave and pure and modest. The story is told of one shy little page at the court of France that when one of the court ladies asked whom he loved best, he replied, "My lady mother first, and after her my sister." "That is not what I mean," said the lady. "Tell me who is your lady-love in chiv-

alry." The little fellow admitted that he had none. After a severe lecture because he was so unchivalric, he chose a little girl of his own age. "She is a pretty little girl," replied the lady, "but she cannot advise you or help you on as a knight. You must choose some lady of noble birth who can give you counsel and aid. Then you must do everything in your power to please her. You must be courteous and humble and strive with all your might to win her favor."

Out of doors, too, the page had much to learn. If his lord went to the field of battle, the page went with him to help him in every way that a boy could. He was in no danger, for a knight who attacked a page would have been shamed and disgraced. As for riding, of course he had not been allowed to reach the age of seven without knowing how to sit on a horse; but now riding became a matter of business. It was not a mere canter on a pony whenever he took a fancy; it was a careful training, for he must practice leaping over ditches and walls, he must be able to spring into the saddle without touching the stirrup, and, in short, he must learn to be as perfectly at home on the back of a horse as on his own feet. Light weapons were provided for him, and he must learn how to use sword and lance and bow, and how to swim and

box and fence. He must meet the other boys of the castle in mock contests. These were carefully watched by the elders, who were eager to see whether or not the son

A KING RECEIVING A KNIGHT

of some valiant knight bade fair to maintain the reputation of his father.

A most important part of the boy's instruction was hunting, or the "mystery of the woods," and hawking, or the "mystery of the rivers," so called because it was often pursued on the open banks of streams. The page who

understood hawking had conquered a most complicated branch of his education. He had to learn the different kinds of falcons, how to train the birds to throw themselves upon their prey, how to feed them, and what calls to use with them. There was a rule for every act; for instance, there was only one way in which a hawk might be properly carried. The master's arm must be held parallel with his body, but not touching it, and the forearm must be held out at a right angle as a perch for the bird. A man who would practice the mystery of the rivers and did not carry his falcon in the approved fashion would have been the laughing-stock of his companions. Even pages had their own falcons, and a taste for hunting and hawking was looked upon as a mark of noble blood. When a page was sent to bear a letter, he sometimes carried his falcon on his wrist for company on the way. There were possible dangers on every journey, but I fancy that the page was always glad to be sent with a message, especially if it was a pleasant one, for then he was sure of a warm welcome and generous gifts from the happy recipient.

During the seven or eight years that he was a page, the boy was always looking forward to the time when he would become a squire, for this was the next step

toward knighthood. Now that he had grown older and stronger, more service was required of him, and his exercises became more severe. Within the castle he continued to serve at the table; but he was now privileged to present the first or principal cup of wine. He still brought water for the hand-washing, and he carved the meat. He never sat at the same table with his lord. Indeed, in many places a knight would not permit his own son to eat with him until he, too, had been made a knight. In Chaucer's description of a squire, he makes it clear that the young man of twenty years was a brave young fellow who had had considerable experience in warfare, but

> Curteys he was, lowly and servisable,
> And carf beforn his fader at the table.

After the meal was over, squires and pages together cleared the hall for dancing, or they brought tables for checkers or for the heavy chessboards then in use. Whatever amusement was on foot, the squire was permitted to share. Indeed, throughout all the training of a boy for knighthood, it was never forgotten that he must be taught to make himself as agreeable within the castle as he was expected to be courageous without its walls. An important part of his education was practice in composing love

songs. He was expected of course to have his lady-love, for whom he must be ready to endure all hardships and meet all dangers.

He continued the exercises of his days as a page; but he gave much more time to them. He learned to leap farther, to run longer distances, to climb jagged cliffs almost as perpendicular as the walls of the cities which he hoped some day to be able to aid in capturing. He learned to bear hunger and thirst and heat and cold and to keep himself awake through long nights of watching. His weapons were now made larger and heavier. He was taught to wield the great battle-axe, to endure the weight of armor, and to move about in it easily. A battle in the Middle Ages was more like a large number of duels than a contest between bodies of troops, and an exceedingly good preparation for this kind of warfare was an exercise known as the quintain. For this a post was set in the ground on top of which was a crosspiece that would whirl around at a touch. From one end of the crosspiece hung a board and from the other a sand-bag. The squire must ride up to this at full tilt and strike the board with his lance. But woe to him who was slow or clumsy, for quick as a flash the crosspiece whirled about, and he was struck a substantial blow by the sand-bag.

Often the figure of a knight was used, so hung that unless the young squire was skillful enough to strike it on the breast it struck him — and the wooden knight never missed *his* stroke.

QUINTAIN

Each squire in turn became "squire of the body," that is, he was the closest attendant of his lord. When his master went to the field of battle, the helmet was often entrusted to a page, but to carry the shield and armor was the task of the squire of the body. A much more

difficult part of his duty was to array the knight in his armor with all its complicated fastenings. Every knight had his pennon. If he had given long service and had many followers, the point or points of his pennon were cut off, leaving a square banner. He was then called a banneret. Both banneret and baron were privileged to act as commanders of little armies of their own. They were under the king, but each one had his own war-cry and called his men together under his own standard. Whether the squire served banneret or baron or knight, it was his honorable task to bear the banner or pennon. He needed to have his wits about him, for if the knight dropped his weapon, he must be ready to pass him a fresh one. If the knight was unhorsed, the squire must catch his horse if necessary, and help him to mount; and if the horse itself was wounded seriously, the squire must have another one ready or must bring forward his own. If the knight took a prisoner, he was passed over into the charge of the squire, that the knight might be left free for further contests. If the knight was getting the worst of the fight or was attacked by several at once, the squire must come to his aid; if he was taken prisoner, the squire must rescue him if possible; if he was wounded, must carry him to a place of safety; and if he was killed, it

was the sad duty of the squire to see that he received an honorable burial.

Every year brought the time nearer when the squire was to be made a knight. The one thing necessary to bring this about was for the king or some other knight to give him the accolade, that is, a blow on his should-

KNIGHTS FIGHTING

der or the back of his neck as he knelt to receive it. This was usually followed by the words, "In the name of God, of Saint Michael, and of Saint George, I dub thee knight. Be brave, ready, and loyal." Sometimes all that was said was, "Be a good knight." When a number of squires were to be made knights, as often happened just before or just after a battle, the ceremony was no more com-

plicated than this. Sometimes on the very battle-field, when a squire had done some praiseworthy deed of bravery, he was knighted in this simple and direct fashion. When there was plenty of time, however, the process

CONFERRING KNIGHTHOOD ON THE BATTLE-FIELD

was much longer. First, the hair of the candidate was cut. To give up one's hair was looked upon as a mark of the devotion of one's self to God. Generally the cutting of a single lock was regarded as sufficient, but sometimes the head was shaved in the fashion of the tonsure

of the priest. The candidate was put into a bath and then into a bed. Every part of the ceremony had a meaning, and these acts signified, first, purity, and then the rest which he who had been pure would enjoy in Paradise. He was now supposed to be cleansed from all sins of his previous life, and to symbolize this he was arrayed in a white shirt, or long tunic. Over it a red garment with long sleeves and a hood was thrown to indicate that he was ready to shed his blood in the service of God, and finally a close black coat was put upon him to remind him of the death which all must meet. After twenty-four hours of fasting, he spent a night in a church, keeping what was called the vigil of arms, that is, kneeling by his armor, praying and meditating. When the sun rose, he made his confession to a priest, heard mass, and partook of the Holy Sacrament.

This was his final preparation. Later in the day he and his friends went to the church or the castle hall. The young man gave his sword to the priest, and the priest laid it upon the altar, praying that God would bless it and that it might defend the Church and protect widows and orphans. The candidate took a solemn oath that it should be used for these purposes. The priest then returned the sword to him and made a little address on the

duties that lay before him in his new life and reminded him of the happiness that awaited him who performed these duties with faithfulness and zeal.

Now came the moment for which every one was waiting. The young man went forward to the lord who was to make him a knight and knelt before him with clasped hands. The lord questioned him somewhat in this wise: "Why do you wish to be made a knight? Is it with the hope of gaining treasure? Is it that men may show you honor?" On the young man's declaring that he had no such wishes, both knights and ladies united in arming him. The golden spurs came first, then the other pieces of armor, and last of all the sword. The lord then gave him the accolade, sometimes a light touch with the sword on the shoulder or the nape of the neck, and sometimes a hearty blow with the hand or even the clenched fist. This was followed by the charge, to be brave, ready, and loyal. The older knights drew their swords and repeated the vows which they had taken on entering chivalry, and the priest pronounced the blessing of the Church upon one and all. So it was that in the ceremony of making a knight, the Church, the soldier, and the woman had each a share. The assembly then passed out into the open air. The horse of the newly made knight stood

waiting. He sprang upon its back — and unless he wished to disgrace his new honors, he must not touch the stirrup — and rode about the court, prancing and caracoling, brandishing his glittering sword, and showing how well he knew the use of his lance. The servants and minstrels of the castle had waited patiently, and now they had their share in the rejoicings, for to prove his gratitude for receiving the noble gift of knighthood the young knight made as generous a gift to each one as his purse would permit.

CHAPTER II

The Knight's Arms and Armor

The chief weapons used by knights were the lance and the sword, and therefore they needed especially some sort of protection against the thrust of a lance and the stroke of a sword. Every knight wore a helmet, for nothing would please his enemy better than to strike a mighty blow that would cleave his head from its crown to the breastbone. There were many sorts of helmets. Some were shaped like closely-fitting hoods, covering the back of the head, but leaving the face unprotected. Some were cone-shaped and had visors that could be lifted, and others were much like broadbrimmed hats. Some had a piece of iron called a nasal which extended down over the forehead and nose; and some covered the whole head like a kettle and had slits through which the knight might peer out at his enemy — or through which the enemy might sometimes thrust the point of a spear. The helmet was not always plain by any means, for it was often beautifully ornamented with silver or gold. It was heavy enough at best; but the

warrior bold never objected to increasing its weight by adding as a crest a little image of an eagle or a lion or a dragon to suggest to his enemy what a brave man he was.

A CREST

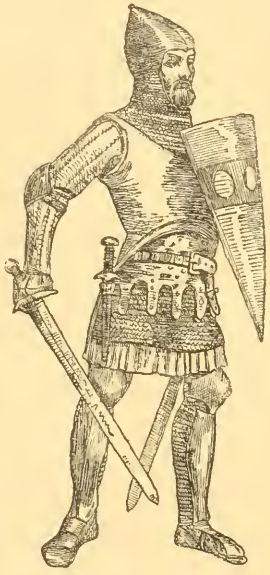
The warrior must guard his heart as well as his head, and he always wore some sort of armor to protect his body. For a long while this was in the form of a short tunic or shirt called a hauberk. With it, chausses, or breeches, were worn. At the neck a hood of mail was joined to the hauberk, or habergeon, which served to protect the back of the head. In the earlier times the hauberk was made of leather or cloth and was often thickly wadded and quilted. Indeed, the leather hauberks never went entirely out of use so long as armor was worn. Sometimes they were really handsome, for the leather was stamped, colored, and gilded in elaborate patterns. They were cheap and convenient; but when an enemy was galloping up to a man and thrusting a lance at his

HAUBERK

heart with full force, even the thickest leather was small protection. It occurred to some one with an inventive mind that if rings of metal were only sewed upon this tunic, it would not be so easy for either lance or sword to reach the heart of a man. The rings were sewed on in rows, and before long larger rings were sewed over them. Then some one said to himself, "Why sew the rings on leather or cloth? Why not interlace them in a network?" and soon knights were setting forth to battle with coats of mail made of interlaced rings. A coat of this kind was far less clumsy and heavy than a leather tunic. Moreover, it could be rolled up into so small a bundle that it could be carried on the back of a saddle.

This was a fairly good protection against sword and spear, and probably the knights who first went out to battle with new and shining ring or chain armor felt that nothing better could ever be invented; but there were two other weapons whose blow was only made more dangerous by this armor. These were the battle-axe and the heavy battle-hammer, or martel. The head of the hammer sometimes weighed twenty pounds, and with a strong man to wield it with both hands it became a terrible weapon. The priests and bishops of those days were often called upon to lead their people in fighting

as well as in praying. The Church law forbade them to "take the sword," but it said nothing about the hammer; therefore they took the hammer and went into battle with clear consciences. When either hammer or axe struck its crushing blow, chain armor was worse than nothing, for it tore the flesh beneath it into rough, jagged wounds that were hard to heal.



KNIGHT IN ARMOR

The next invention was to fasten on plates of steel at the most exposed places, and soon the coudière protected the elbow and the genouillière the knee. Little by little the chain armor disappeared, and armor of overlapping scales took its place. Every piece had its name. The chest and back were protected by a cuirass; the throat by a gorget, and thighs by cuisses, the arms and shoulders by brassarts and ailettes, and the hands by gauntlets, while the chausses were extended to protect the toes. The chain armor was much easier to put on, and a knight could slip it over his head even after he saw his enemy in the distance galloping

toward him. The plate armor protected him from sword and spear and in great degree from hammer and battle-axe, but it took so long to put it on that the knight had to wear it not only in time of battle, but whenever there was the least danger of being surprised by an enemy. When two knights fought, the one who could unhorse the other was usually the winner, for while his adversary rolled helplessly on the ground, he could slip a thin, slender dagger in between the plates of his armor and kill him. To do such a deed, however, would have been a shame and disgrace to any true knight unless he first asked, "Will you yield, rescue or no rescue?" If the vanquished man replied, "I yield," the dagger of mercy, as it was called, was not used, but he was led away as a prisoner. If a knight fell into the power of a man who had not taken even the first steps toward knighthood, he was indeed in difficulties. Naturally, he wished to save his life; but to surrender to an adversary of low degree would be a humiliation hard for any valiant knight to endure. Some one discovered an amusing way of escaping from this dilemma. He simply made his captor a knight and then surrendered to him; thus saving both his life and his pride.

The knight wore golden spurs. These were his espe-

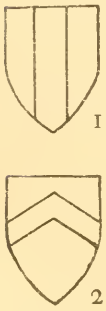
cial badge of honor, and they were forbidden to all of lesser rank. He carried a shield large enough to protect his body and to serve as a litter on which, if he was wounded, he could be carried from the field. Across his shoulder he often wore a silken scarf called a baldric, embroidered by the lady for whose glory his deeds of prowess were done. In Joseph Rodman Drake's poem on *The American Flag*, he said that its white came from "the milky baldric of the skies," meaning the Milky Way. Another way by which a knight could show loyalty to one's lady-love was to fasten her glove or scarf to his helmet. Still another way was to fasten one of her sleeves to his shoulder. Sleeves were so long in those times that they sometimes touched the ground, and must have hampered the knight badly. The fashion of wearing them as pennons was much more reasonable.

As a protection from the heat of the sun, which beat down upon his armor of steel, the knight wore also a sort of sleeveless tunic called a tabard, and also jupon, gipon, and surcoat. At first this was made of linen or a coarse cloth known as fustian, but as people became more luxurious, silk or fur or cloth of gold was used. It must soon have become badly stained by the armor beneath it. The poet Chaucer never failed to notice

whether things were fresh and clean and dainty, and he wrote of a knight who had just returned from warfare, —

> Of fustian he wered a gipoun
> Al bismotered [stained] with his habergeoun.

After armor was so made that it hid the face of the knight, the custom arose of engraving some device upon the shield or breastplate by which he might be recognized. This was also embroidered upon his surcoat and upon the trappings of his horse. These are the "arms" or "coats of arms" or "armorial bearings" that have been handed down in many families, together with the figures on the helmets known as crests. The oldest arms were simple arrangements of straight lines, but soon the devices became more complex. Circles, trefoils, arrows, and swords were used. The figures of animals appeared, such as cranes, mullets, lions, and horses; and also fabulous beasts, such as dragons and unicorns. Frequently a device was chosen which had connection with some event of its bearer's life. If a man had a noted adventure with a wolf, he was likely to choose the figure of a wolf for his coat of arms. The terms in which arms are described are taken



SHIELDS

from the French; for instance, in figure 2, if the shield is silver and the bar, or "rafter," is red, the proper description would be: "Argent, a chevron gules."

The favorite weapons of the knight were the spear and the sword, as has been said. The spear was made of ash and had a head of iron. Just below the head the ensign, called the gonfanon, or pennon, was fastened. This was sometimes made of linen, but often of the richest silk. The sword which hung from the knight's belt was his darling. He spoke of it almost as affectionately as if it had been a brother in arms. "My own good sword," he called it. He even gave it a name. Charlemagne's sword was Joyosa; Roland's was Durindana; Arthur's was Excalibur. The Cid's favorite sword, Tizona, was buried with him. The sword was more than a weapon, for blade and hilt formed the sacred sign of the cross, and many a good knight and true has kissed it fervently and murmured his last prayer as he lay dying on the field of battle. Not only the sword, but also many other parts of the knight's equipment had their significance. The straightness of the spear symbolized truth, and its iron head, strength. The helmet suggested modesty; the spurs, diligence. The shield reminded him that as by its use he saved his own body,

so ought he to use that body to protect his lord when in danger.

The knight's good steed that carried him into the battle was an important part of his equipment. The powerful horses of Spain were always liked by knights, but the Arabian coursers were even greater favorites. The horses of the Arabs had been petted and loved and treated almost as members of their masters' families for so many generations that they were fearless servants and devoted friends. If the knight was thrown from his seat, the horse had no thought of running away, but stood quietly beside him, waiting for him to mount. The horse as well as his rider was protected by armor, so that head, chest, and flanks were safe from spear thrusts. He was arrayed in trappings as handsome as his master could afford. The housings, or saddlecloths, were

KNIGHT ON HORSEBACK

often of rich material and decorated with embroidery. On his head, he, too, wore a crest, and around his neck a collar of little bells. Chaucer says of a monk who liked to go hunting,

> And whan he rood men myghte his brydel here
> Gynglen in a whistlyng wynd as clere,
> And eek as loude as doth the chapel belle.

It was on the bridle, however, that the knight lavished his pennies. This was ornamented with gold and silver and embroidery, and even with precious stones, that flashed and sparkled as the steed bore his rider proudly into the contest. After the combat of the day was over, the tent pitched, and the supper prepared, the faithful horse was not forgotten, and one of the early pictures shows him eating comfortably from a crib in his master's tent close to the knight's own table.

CHAPTER III

Jousts and Tournaments

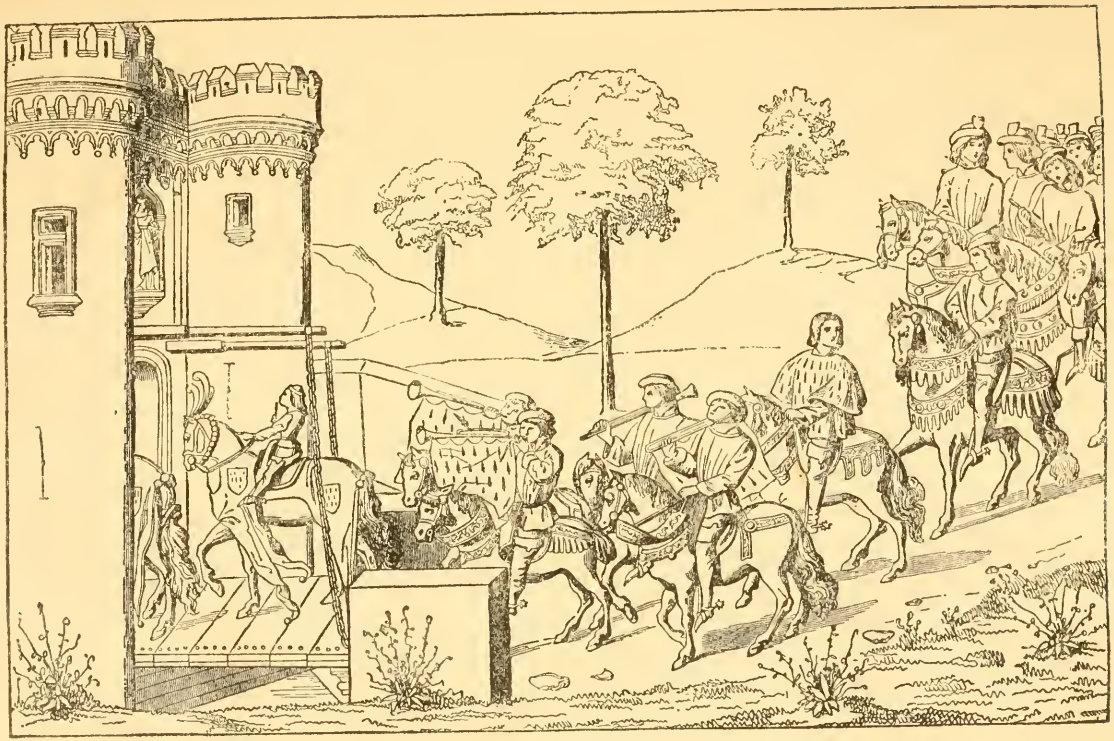
After the young squire had become a knight, he sometimes remained in the castle of his lord for a time or he went back to his father's home. In either case life must have seemed a little tame after all the excitement of entering knighthood. It is no wonder that he was eager to go out into the world to try his new armor and do honor to his lady by his deeds of valor.

There were several ways in which a knight might prove his worthiness to enter chivalry. The simplest was to mount his horse and ride out in quest of adventures. His bright shining armor was protected from rain and he himself from heat by his unsoiled surcoat. Behind him rode his squire, carrying his master's shield and helmet and an armful of lances. The squire was not always a rash, hot-headed young fellow by any means. A man could hardly maintain knighthood properly without a generous income, and many a squire who was fully qualified to enter the ranks of the knights never went beyond

the second grade in chivalry. It was well for the venturesome knight errant, or wandering knight, if his squire was some sturdy warrior of middle age who would sympathize with his master's thirst for gallant achievements, but would hold him back from foolish recklessness. The country was wild and rough. Deeds of violence were common, and the young knight might be fortunate enough to find an adventure ready made. He might discover that some maiden fair had been torn from her friends; and he could perhaps rescue her and restore her to them. He might stop at a friendly castle to spend the night and find that its lord would be glad of his aid to defend it against some expected attack of its enemies. Even if all was peaceful, there might be a chance of a contest, or joust. When he appeared at the gate, the porter might tell him that it was the "custom of the castle" for every knight who wished a lodging to joust with one or two of the knightly inmates or with the lord of the castle. If the knight errant vanquished his challenger, he should have the best lodging that the castle afforded; but if he was overcome, he might go his way, or so the porter declared. Visitors were so welcome, however, in the rather lonely castles that I doubt whether any promising stranger was ever allowed to go forth to

make his lodgment in the forest. Sometimes the stranger himself was the challenger; and when he came to a castle gate, he would bid the porter say to the lord of the castle that a knight errant would gladly joust with him or some other brave knight. The stranger was welcomed and led within the walls, and the word was carried through the castle that a joust was to take place. Then ladies and knights and squires, the great folk and the small folk of the place, all betook themselves to the tilting-ground. This was a green, grassy, level spot within the court-yard, surrounded by turfy banks for the lookers-on. The knights took their places, one at each end of the open space. They bent low upon their horses and couched their lances. Then they put spurs to their steeds and dashed together with all their might, each trying to strike the shield of the other with such force that he would fall to the ground. Sometimes both spears were shivered. Then the men would take fresh weapons and try a second bout.

Another way by which an ardent knight errant often made sure of a contest was by taking his stand at a bridge or where two roads crossed and challenging every passing knight to joust with him. If darkness came and no adversary had been found, he would lay down his shield,



ENTERING A TOURNAMENT

take his helmet for a pillow, say his prayers, and go to sleep, hoping for better luck in the morning. Sometimes the knight errant, instead of simply challenging the other to a contest, would declare that his lady was the fairest woman in the world, and that he was ready to fight any knight in the land to maintain her preëminence in beauty. The opposing knight was of course equally ready to declare that *his* lady-love was far more beautiful. The question must be decided by a combat. This usually meant three courses. The spears were carefully "bated," that is, blunted. This was often done by heading them with a "coronal," a sort of crown ending in from two to six blunt points. These would take hold on shield or helmet, but would do no injury to the wearer. Such a contest was called a *joute à plaisance*, or joust of peace. Unless something happened to arouse the wrath of the combatants, there was rarely any serious injury done to either of them; but if two knights fought in anger, using deadly weapons, their combat was known as a *joute à l'outrance*, that is, a joust to the extreme. After the contest was done, the victor spoke in somewhat this wise to the vanquished: "I bid you make your way to my lady, through whose favor I have won this victory, and submit yourself wholly to her grace and mercy."

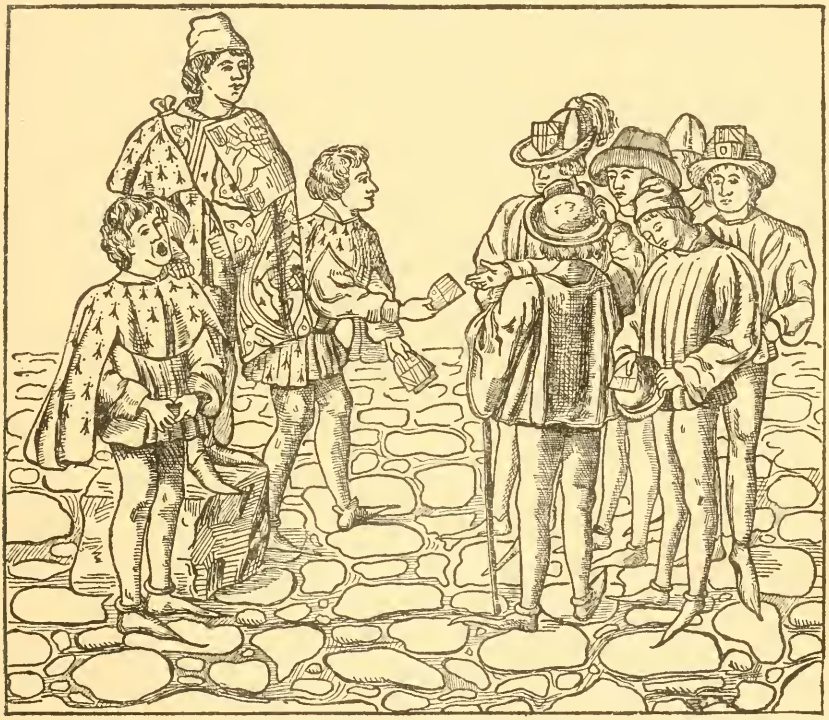
As one knight after another presented himself to the lady, she must certainly have been fully convinced that

A TOURNAMENT

her champion was true to her. Moreover, those were times of danger and violence, and every evidence of his courage and valor was one more proof of his ability to guard her and protect her.

These chance jousts at crossroads and castles were good practice in the use of arms, but the grand opportunity for a knight not only to show excellence in knighthood but to manifest ability under the very eyes of his lady-love was found in the tournament, or encounter of many knights in a sort of mimic battle. These tournaments were given by wealthy nobles or by the king himself, and elaborate preparations were made for them long beforehand. The invitations were carried by the heralds of the giver of the tournament. A castle guard would report that a herald with trumpets and escort was making his way to the castle gate. The gate was straightway thrown open, and with a great clattering of hoofs the little cavalcade rode over the drawbridge and through the low, dark gateway into the courtyard. The trumpeter blew a blast to call the attention of the folk of the castle. He might have saved his breath, however, for long before this, lords and ladies, knights, squires, pages, and servants, even down to the scullions in the kitchen, had hurried into the courtyard or had found some other place where they could hear what the herald had to say. Then came the proclamation of the tournament, addressed to all who would show their right to knighthood and mani-

fest their respect for ladies. The place, the hour, the prizes, the armor and weapons required, and sometimes even the number of squires and attendants that



PROCLAIMING A TOURNAMENT

each knight must bring were proclaimed. The herald blew his trumpet and gave his announcement not only at castles, but wherever markets were held. Sometimes, if the tournament was to be of unusual splendor, invita-

tions were sent not only throughout the land of the giver, but even into neighboring countries.

Traveling was slow work, therefore the invitations must have been given long before the time set for the tournament, but I fancy that there was not a young knight in the land who did not, on the very day of the herald's visit, begin to polish his armor and take a look at his spears to make sure that their ashen shafts showed no sign of flaw. As for the ladies, they, too, had their share of preparations to make, for they must appear in their most sumptuous attire to grace the occasion. Each one hoped that her own special knight would cover himself with glory, and then she would fain look her fairest that all might have respect for the choice that he had made.

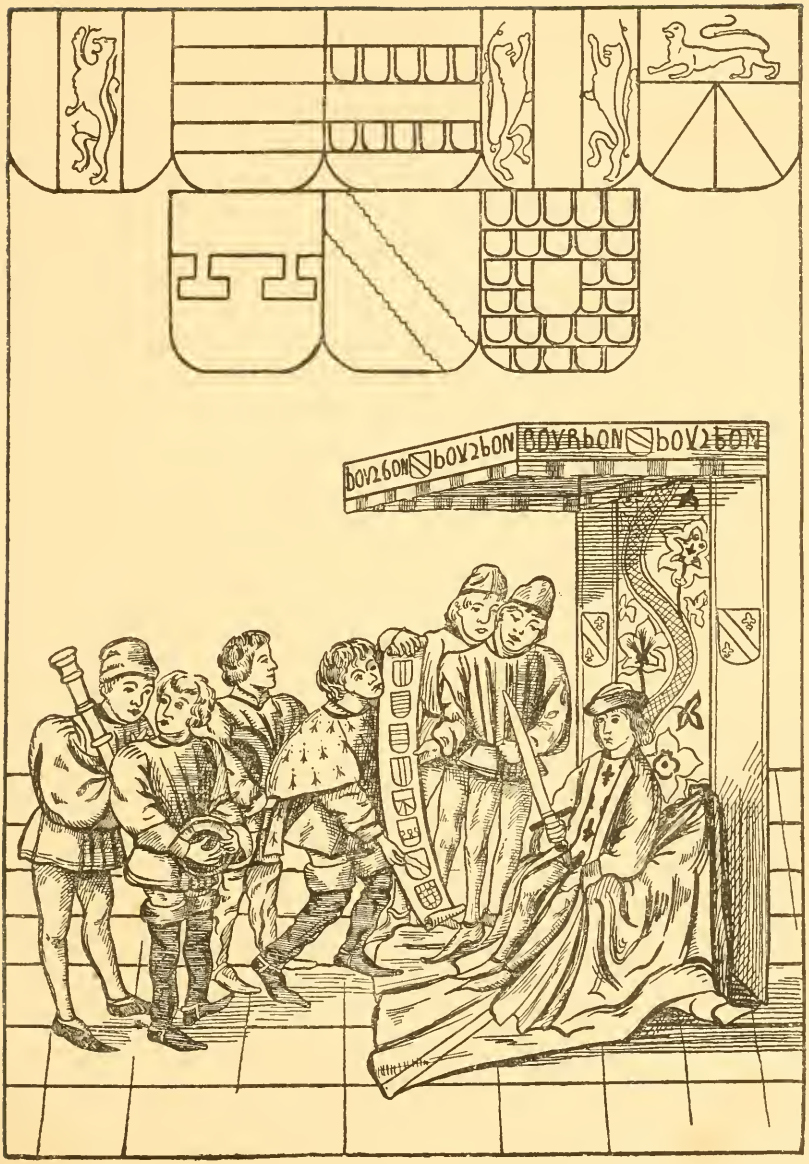
The journey to a tournament might be long, but it was safer than other journeys, for even rulers of hostile countries would have thought it unworthy of them to interfere with those who were on their way to a trial of arms. As for the king of whatever land it might be in which the tournament was to take place, he was always delighted with any occasion that gave his knights practice. From far and near little companies of knights with the ladies of the noble households and the squires

and pages and servants in attendance rode merrily toward the place of meeting. Once there, they were welcomed by their host, and lodgings were arranged for them. Some were to sleep within the castle itself, some in a neighboring village, some in tents belonging to the lord of the castle, and some had brought their own tents. Wherever a knight was lodged, he planted his spear and banner, and over the entrance he set up the design which was on his coat of arms. These designs were known to all the other knights, and they were carefully scrutinized. In the earlier days of chivalry, only knights of noble descent were allowed to join in a tournament, but in later times not only men of humble birth who had been knighted for their bravery, but even squires were admitted to the privileges of the lists. Occasionally, too, a man who had some good reason for not revealing his name was allowed to join the tourney. Humble birth, then, might be pardoned and concealment of one's name might sometimes be overlooked, but there was one thing that was never forgiven, and that was unworthiness. If a knight had been false to any woman or had broken his word or had shown cowardice or ingratitude, he might as well have remained at home, for he would be forbidden to take any part in

the tournament and his banner would be torn down in disgrace.

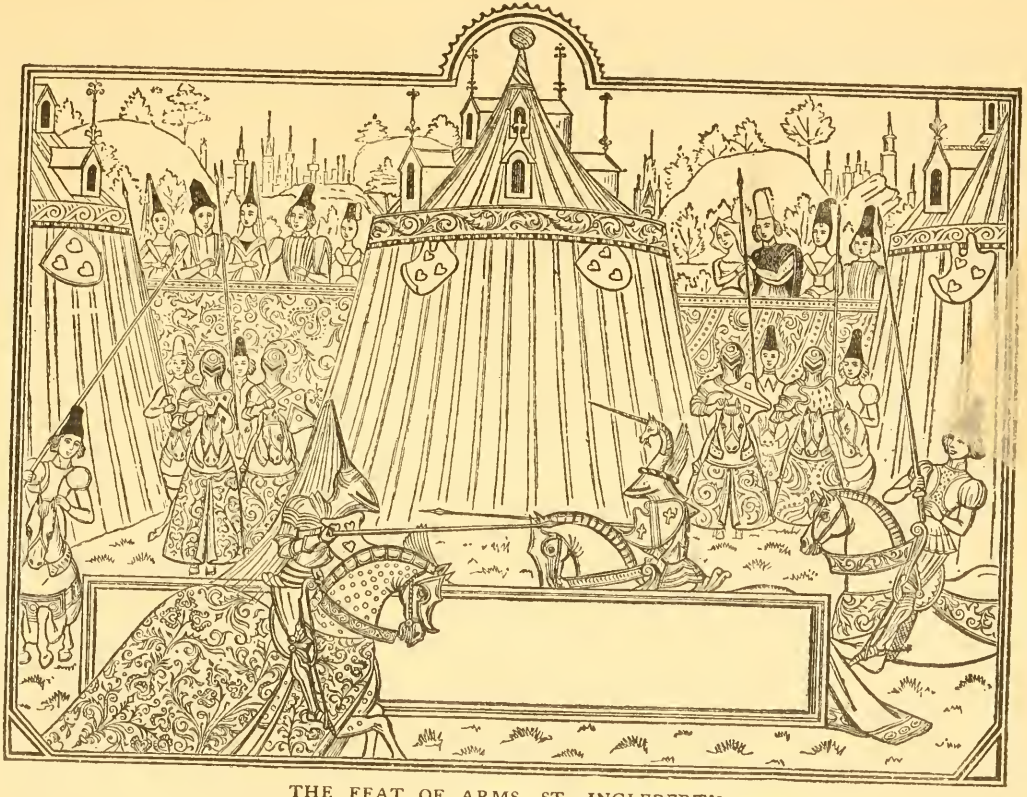
The courtyard of the castle must have seemed like a village in a time of holiday. There were old friends who saw each other but seldom; there were knights whose rumored bravery every one wanted to see tested; there were gallant youths and maidens fair. There was talk of other tournaments and the feats which had made them remembered, of hawking and hunting, of new castles that had been built and old ones that had been valiantly defended, of weapons and warfare and horses and heroes. There were little trial jousts between knights. There were feasting and music and dancing and singing and exchanging of gifts and plighting of troth.

On the night before the tournament everybody went to bed early; but when the morning had come, the courtyard was no longer a village on a holiday, it was rather a village hard at work. No one was idle, for the handles of the shields must be tried, the armor must have its final polish; straps, rivets, and buckles must be examined for the last time. Horses must be fed and rubbed down. Even the musicians were testing their clarions and kettle-drums and pipes and trumpets as if the success of the whole day depended upon their being in full tone.



KING AT ARMS: SHOWING ARMORIAL BEARINGS OF CONTESTANTS

Everybody was discussing those who were to contest. One was a favorite because he had distinguished himself elsewhere, another because of his great strength or his determined manner or his skill in managing his horse. Of course every lady had her favorite knight; but the ladies were bound to be fair, for they were umpires if any dispute arose, and the prizes were presented according to their decision. Early in the morning the contestants had been to mass, and now, when all was ready, every one turned toward the lists. These had been prepared long before. A level oblong area had been fenced off with a double row of wooden railings. Between the two was a space saved for those who were to assist injured knights or who held some position of responsibility. Outside of this space wooden galleries, often very handsome, had been built for the spectators. These galleries were gorgeous with tapestry and banners and with the bright-colored dresses and sparkling jewels of the ladies. The lord of the tournament had already announced what arms it would be allowable to use. As a general thing, it was forbidden to bring into the lists any weapon with a sharp point. The broadsword, but not the pointed sword, was sometimes permitted. The points of the lances were removed or protected by coronals or covered



THE FEAT OF ARMS, ST. INGLEBERT'S

with pieces of wood called rockets. The heralds now proclaimed the rules of the contest. He who broke most lances was to have the first prize; but they must be broken in strict accordance with the laws of the tournament; for instance, to break a spear by striking a man out of his saddle counted three points, but to break one by striking the saddle itself made a loss of one point. To meet coronal with coronal twice was regarded as worthy of a prize, but it counted less than to unhorse a man with a spear thrust. The prize was lost to any one who struck a horse, or struck a man when his back was turned or when he was unarmed. To break a lance across the breast of an opponent was looked upon as a shame because it showed poor riding, and to ride well was the most essential qualification of a knight. Shakespeare laughs at the "puny tilter, that spurs his horse but on one side." If for a moment of rest or for any other reason a man took off his helmet, no one might touch him until it was replaced; but to prevent any abuse of the privilege, he who removed his helmet twice for any other reason than because his horse had failed him lost all chance of a prize.

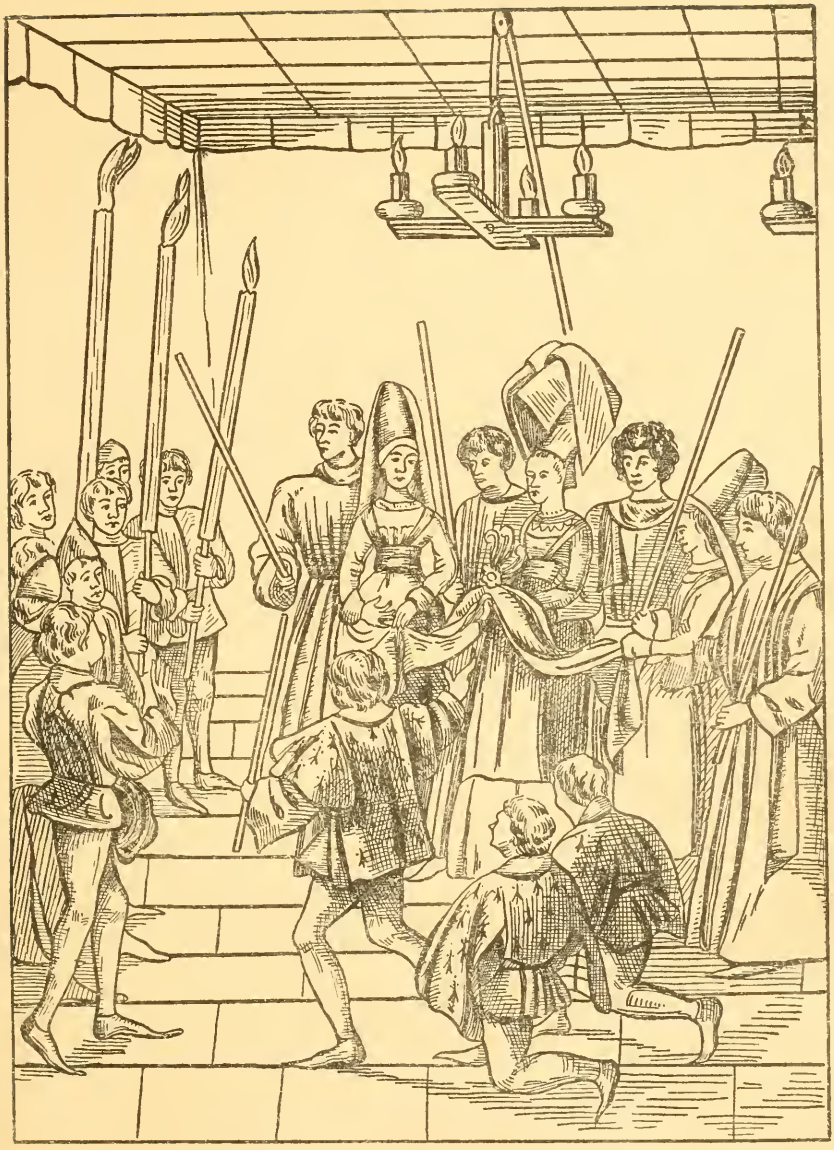
After the constable had examined the arms of the knights, he looked carefully at their saddle fastenings to

make sure that no one proposed to stick to his horse by leather straps rather than by good horsemanship. When all was ready, the heralds cried, "Come forth, knights, come forth!" and a glittering cavalcade made its way into the lists. The horses in their superb trappings, their bridles blazing with jewels, pranced and caracoled. Sometimes every knight was led by a chain of gold or silver, the other end of which was held in the white hand of some lady fair. The armor gleamed and flashed in the sun. Armorial bearings shone forth on the brightly polished shields. From jeweled helmets and from lances fluttered gloves or ribbons belonging to the ladies who were watching so eagerly, and from many a knightly shoulder hung the richly ornamented sleeve of some comely maiden.

The knights were in two groups separated by a rope, one party at either end of the lists. Behind them rode their squires, often as many as three to a knight. "Let go," cried the ladies. The trumpets sounded. "Do your duty, valiant knights!" the heralds shouted. The rope was snatched aside. The knights bent low, put spurs to their horses, and with lances in rest dashed forward to meet their opponents, each one calling the name of his lady-love. "The eyes of the beautiful behold you! Onward, onward!" cried the spectators. The minstrels played, the

trumpets blared, the plain was shaken with the trampling of the horses; the din of arms and the cracking of stout ashen spears filled the air. Men were thrown from their steeds, blood mingled with the dust — and the first course had been run.

Sometimes there were several such encounters; and when the end had come, the heralds cried, "Fold your banners!" and soon the lists were deserted. After the knights had bathed and dressed, they met the ladies in the great hall of the castle and banqueted and made merry. The scene for which all waited was yet to come; and when the feasting had been brought to an end, the fair lady who had been chosen "Queen of Love and Beauty" took her seat upon a dais. The heralds led up to her one brave knight after another, rehearsing in a loud voice the claims of each to a prize; and as they knelt before her, she presented to each one the reward which in the judgment of the ladies was due to his valor. This was sometimes a silver helmet or one richly ornamented with gold, a crown of gold, a golden clasp, or perhaps a diamond, ruby, or sapphire, set in a heavy golden ring. With every gift the "Queen" made a little speech which always closed with the hope that the recipient might be happy with his lady-love. "The victory was owing to the favor



CONFERRING PRIZES

of my lady which I wore in my helmet," was the proper reply for the knight to make. After the prizes had all been awarded, gifts were made to the heralds. Then followed a ball; and here not the man of noblest birth, but the man who had shown most valor in the lists was most highly honored. With music and dancing the long, bright, joyous day came to its close.

Frequently a single day was not enough to satisfy the love of knightly prowess, and on the second day the lists were given over to the squires. They wore the armor of their respective knights and strove their best to do it honor. Prizes were presented to them by young maidens. Sometimes there was even a third day of tilting, and in that case both knights and squires took part.

Such was the general course of tournaments, but they differed at different times and in different countries and according to the wishes and rulings of the givers. Sometimes if the leaders of the two sides chanced to be enemies or rivals, the tournament became a little war. Deadly weapons were then smuggled into the lists, and the ground was drenched with blood. The intention of the tournament, however, was that the utmost courtesy should be shown and that an opportunity should be given to manifest skill in arms and cultivate it rather than to wound or

maim or destroy life. At best it was a rough and sometimes a fatal sport, but it did teach men that even in the midst of the most eager struggles for victory it was possible for them to recognize laws and exercise self-restraint.

An appeal to arms was often made to settle questions of justice. If two men claimed the same piece of ground, for instance, they might decide the ownership by a contest. Even if a man was accused of crime, he was sometimes allowed to prove his innocence — if he could — by showing himself or his chosen champion the victor in a duel. Under Charlemagne a test of endurance was legally used when two men differed. They were made to take their stand before a cross with their arms stretched out. The one whose arms first dropped lost his suit.

In charges of serious crime, however, the people of the Middle Ages often used methods that might well appall the most innocent. One was to bind the accused, hand and foot, and let him down by a rope into the water. It was believed that if he was guilty, the water would refuse to receive him and he would float; but that if he was innocent, he would sink. It is to be hoped that the officers never forgot to rescue the man who sank. Far worse than this was the ordeal by boiling water. This was a matter

of much ceremony. It took place in the church. First, a cross, a censer, and relics of the saints were borne into the building. The priest followed, carrying a copy of the Gospels. He chanted a litany and the seven penitential Psalms. He prayed that the truth might be revealed, and that if the accused had had recourse to herbs or magic, it might not save him. Holy water was sprinkled about, particularly upon the kettle, in order that any illusions of the devil might be driven away. Then with many prayers the hand of the accused was thoroughly washed. He drank a cup of holy water and plunged his hand into the boiling kettle. The hand was sealed up, and at the end of three days it was formally examined. If it showed no sign of a burn, the man was declared innocent; but if there was a blister "half as large as a walnut," this was regarded as proof of his guilt.

Another ordeal was that of the hot iron. This sometimes consisted of carrying redhot iron seven or nine paces; sometimes of walking upon burning ploughshares. In the eleventh century Queen Emma of England was accused of crime and was brought into the church for the test. The pavement was carefully swept and nine redhot ploughshares were laid upon it. The queen's shoes and stockings were taken off and her cloak

thrown aside. Two bishops, one on either hand, led her toward the iron. Throughout the church there was sobbing and weeping. "Help her, help her! Saint Swithin, help her!" the people cried. The bishops, too, were in tears; but they bade her not to fear, for God would not suffer the innocent to come to harm. Then she stepped upon the ploughshares, one after another. The old account says that she felt no pain and that her feet showed no injury.

The theory of these trials was that God would always save the guiltless; but many explanations have been attempted of the reason why hot water and hot iron did not burn. If the water, or the melted lead, which was sometimes used, was hot enough, feats similar to these have been performed. In regard to the test of the red-hot iron, it has been suggested that during the many prayers that seem to have been said after the irons were laid in place, ploughshares on a stone floor would cool very rapidly. Again, we are reminded that all these trials were in the hands of the priests, that the people were expecting miracles, and that if the priests wished to save a man, they could easily arrange some deception or could harden his skin by some ointment — only no one can guess what the ointment could have been.

People connected with the Church were not obliged to undergo such experiences; for, no matter of what crime they were accused, they could always demand a trial before the Church courts. This was called "benefit of clergy." In some of the Church courts of the thirteenth century, if a man accused of crime swore that he was innocent and could bring in twelve of his friends who would lay their hands on some holy relics and swear that they believed him, he was allowed to go free. To escape in this way was not quite so easy as it looks; for the general belief was that a perjurer would probably be made a dwarf or would be unable to remove his hands or would even be struck dead. Naturally, then, the *compurgators*, or fellow-swearers, were somewhat nervous, and if they made the least mistake in repeating the required form of words, their oaths were of no avail. Not only priests, but all their assistants, even to the doorkeeper, were allowed benefit of clergy. In some places if a man could read a single line, he was allowed the same privilege. It is even said that the same verse of the Psalms was always used as a test. Besides the comparative comfort of the trial, the punishments of the Church courts were exceedingly light when contrasted with the brutal penalties of the kings' courts. But for the man

accused of serious crime who could not make out that he had any connection with the Church or any "book learning," there was generally little hope of escaping some one of the ordeals which have just been described.

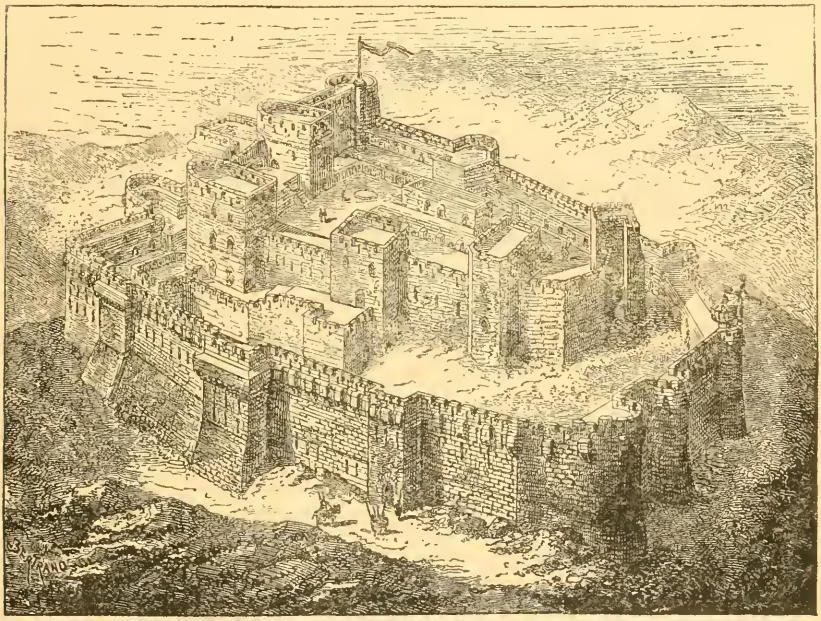
CHAPTER IV

How to Capture a Castle

In the times when no man was safe unless he could protect himself with his own strong arm or the arms of his followers, the castle of a nobleman had to be well fortified. If it was not, the chances were that it would soon change owners. The very word "castle" means a fortified residence.

At first the means of protection were of the simplest kind. A wide earthen wall thrown up around a group of huts was regarded as a valuable defense. Stronger walls were made by using trunks of trees and rough stone work for the foundation and filling in the spaces with earth. Stakes were driven down and bound together to form a stout palisade, or fence. After a time wooden forts were reared of heavy logs and beams. Stone finally took the place of wood; and it was of stone that most of the castles of the days of knighthood were built. These were far removed from the simple fortifications of earlier times. They had massive stone walls and towers, moats, or wide, deep ditches filled with

water, inner courts and outer courts, chapels, cellars, dungeons, together with chambers and staircases cut out of the thickness of the walls, drawbridges, and underground passages — all of which seem somewhat romantic

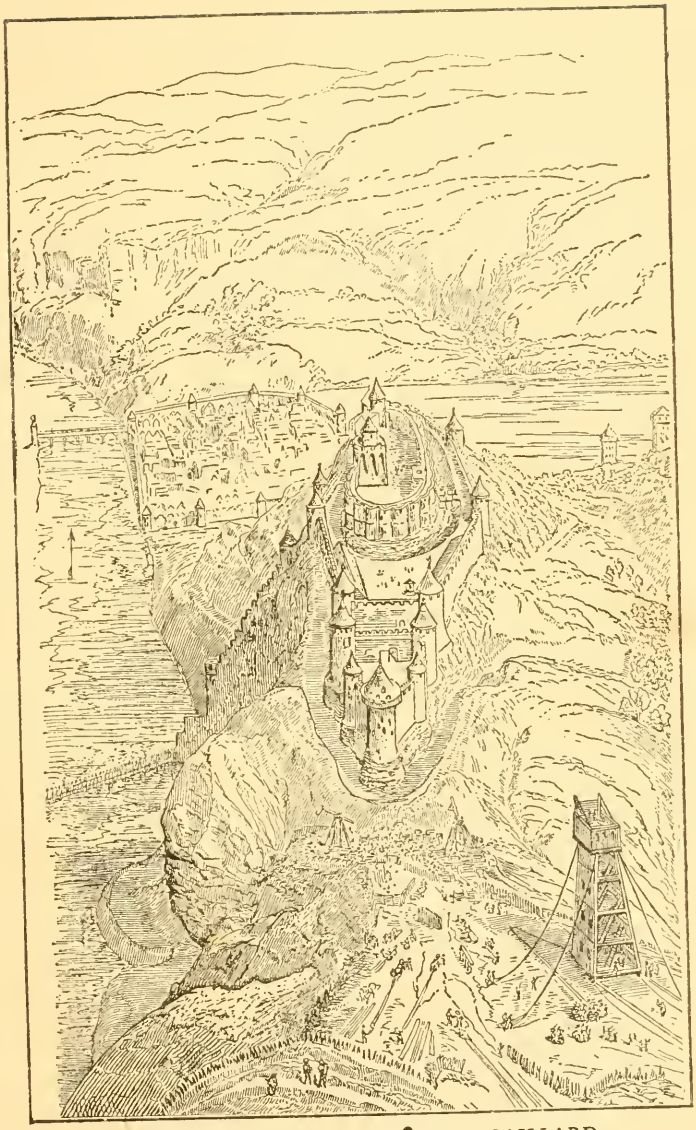


A CASTLE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

in stories, but which were exceedingly necessary and matter-of-fact means of protection when they were built.

For the site of a castle a noble sometimes chose an island in a lake, like the famous Castle of Chillon in Lake Geneva, or a low, swampy place that an enemy would

find difficult to reach; but he generally preferred the bank of a river or some high, rocky location. One of the most famous castles was the Château Gaillard, or the "Saucy Castle," which was built in Normandy by Richard the Lion-hearted in the days when kings of England still held possessions in France. It stood on a narrow promontory three hundred feet above the river Seine with a deep valley on either hand. The north end of the promontory was so steep and rocky that there was little danger of an attack on that side. The south end, however, sloped, and up this gently rising ground an enemy might easily advance. It was wise, then, to make the fortifications exceedingly strong at the south. A glance at the plan shows how this was done. C represents an outwork with five strong towers whose walls were eleven feet thick. These were connected by "curtains," that is, heavy stone walls from eight to twelve feet thick and thirty feet or more in height. All around this massive outwork was a ditch, E, some thirty feet wide and more than forty feet deep. The gate was at D; but before any one could reach it, he must find some way of crossing the moat. Friends might cross by means of a wooden drawbridge; but at the first glimpse of an enemy, chains and weights were set in motion, and the bridge was

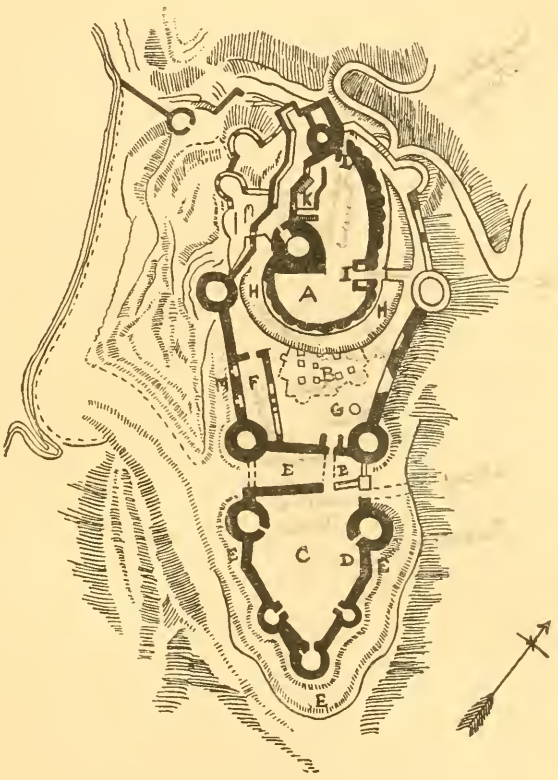


BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF CHÂTEAU GAILLARD

pulled up flat against the wall. The gate was protected by a portcullis, that is, a sort of screen made of heavy beams, each one pointed with iron. When no enemy was at hand, this hung quietly above the entrance, but at the first sign of danger, there was a great rattling of chains, and in a moment the portcullis had dropped in its grooves.

Between this outwork, or "outer court," C, and the "middle court," B, there must have been some sort of passage way, and probably walls to protect it. The middle court had also a moat. It had towers and curtains, and within it was a chapel, F, and a well, G. Out of this middle court an area was taken about as large as the outer court to form the "inner court," A. The wall which separated the two courts was so strong that it does not seem as if it could ever have been overthrown, for it was thirty feet high and eight feet thick. This was only the beginning of its strength, however, for on the side next the middle court rounding buttresses had been added. On top of the wall there were probably battlements, that is, a low, narrow wall running along the outer edge of the main wall and cut down at points a few feet apart. The defenders of the castle could shoot their arrows through the open spaces and then step behind the parapet for shelter. The wall protected the

inner court, but the wall itself was protected, for the solid cliff on which it stood was cut down perpendicularly, or "scarped" for twenty feet, so that, even if an enemy had succeeded in getting possession of the middle court, he would still have the moat, H, to cross; and on the other side of the moat there would tower up above him twenty feet of perpendicular cliff and thirty feet of solid wall.



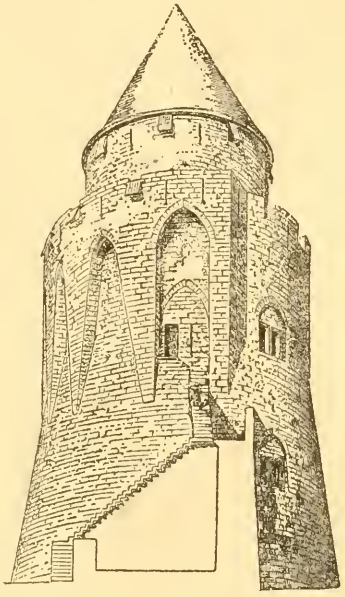
PLAN OF CHÂTEAU GAILLARD

The entrance to the inner court was at I. It was approached by a causeway cut out of the solid rock; but it did not afford a very agreeable entrance to an unwelcome visitor, for there was an outer

portcullis and an inner portcullis; and even if he succeeded in passing these and also the gateway studded with iron, he would find himself at the foot of a steep stairway cut in the rock, and the greeting that he would receive from the inmates of the castle would not be to his liking.

The inner court, then, stood some twenty feet above the middle court. It was protected by a wall thirty feet high with a perpendicular base twenty feet high and by a moat. Within this court was a deep well, for in case of a siege the defenders of this court might be cut off from the well at G. In this inner court was the strongest fortification of all, the castle proper, the great tower known as the keep, K. Its walls were eleven feet thick. The circular space within was twenty-six feet in diameter. In the basement was one window, but no door. The first floor had two windows, but they were small, for safety was thought of before air and sunshine. Here, however, was a door, small and well protected. It was many feet from the ground and was probably reached by a ladder or movable stairway. The keep was of a singular shape. Evidently King Richard thought that there was little danger of an attack being made from the west, for on that side was a sheer descent of cliff; but the spur of the keep that projected into the first court he made in the shape of a

right angle and built it of solid masonry. The keep was the final place of refuge, and even after every other part of the fortifications had fallen into the hands of an enemy, this could generally withstand any attack that could be made by the engines of those times. Nevertheless, in order to make this keep even stronger, the lower part of the wall "battered," that is, it sloped outward at the base, while above the base rose what are known as machicolations. These were long, heavy brackets supporting a sort of gallery with a parapet. In the floor of the gallery between the machicolations were openings through which arrows could be shot downward or heavy stones could be dropped, or boiling water or oil or melted lead could be poured straight down upon the heads of the besiegers. It is thought that from the top of this keep another and smaller tower rose, and from that yet another, both probably built of wood.

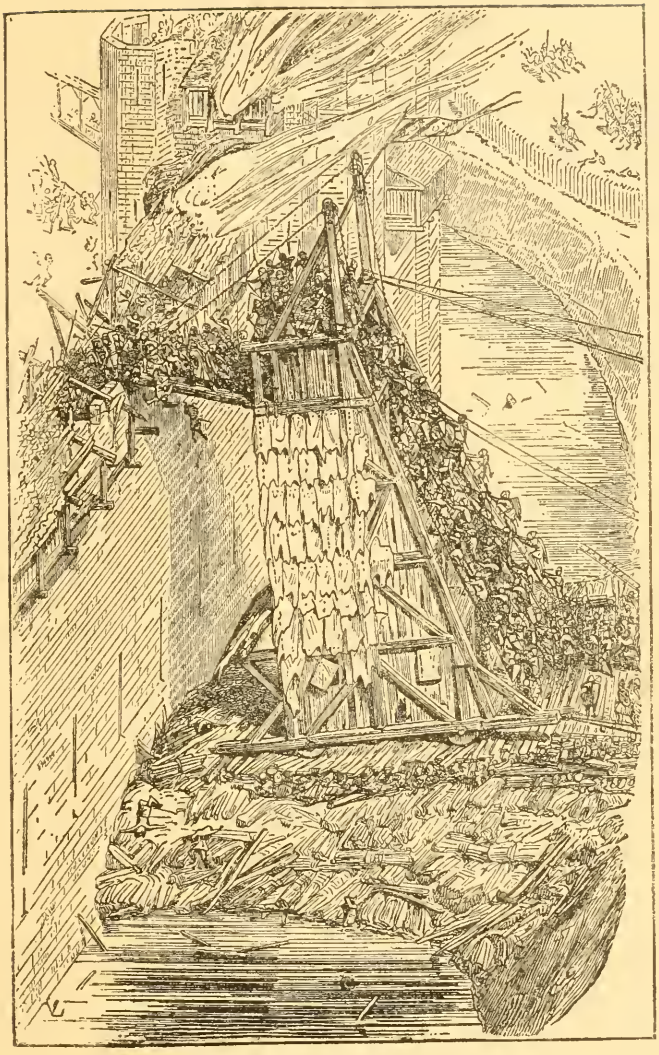


KEEP OF CHÂTEAU GAILLARD

Joining the keep on the north was a building, K, which

is thought to have been the lodging of the castellan, or governor of the castle. From this building stairs descended to what was called the postern gate, L. This was a little narrow door with heavy bars. It was from this gate that spies or messengers were sent out in time of siege. To reach it from within, steps were cut in the rock for about thirty feet. To reach it from without must have been almost impossible, for it opened upon the perpendicular face of the scarp. To let out a messenger or admit a friend, a ladder or a movable bridge was let down. Every castle had its postern, so that if the inmates were besieged, they might have some possible way of communication, dangerous as it was, with the outer world.

When one looks at the ruins of the castles of the Middle Ages, one can hardly see how an enemy ever had the courage to attempt to capture one of them. Indeed, if a foe could spare the time and the men, it was usually easier and cheaper to keep close watch of it until the inmates were starved into a surrender. No matter how full of food the storehouses might be, it would give out some time; and if no assistance came from outside, the castle would have to yield. If an attempt to subdue a castle was to be made, however, there were three common methods of attack. One was to force a way in through a gate if



THE ATTACK FROM A TOWER

possible; a second, to get to the top of the protecting wall and overpower the defenders; and a third, to undermine the walls. If the wall was neither too high nor too well guarded, the enemy could sometimes set up scaling ladders with their iron hooks and make a furious attack upon the defenders at the top, which they resisted as furiously with crowbars, and bills and boar spears. The best way to get to the top of a high and well-defended wall was to use the movable tower. This was a wooden shed several stories high and set upon rollers. When this was to be used, there was a busy running to and fro to collect turf and trunks of trees to throw into the moat. As soon as enough of these materials had been collected to choke up the moat and make a roadway across it, the great tower was rolled cumbrously across the moat and up to the wall. It was filled with men, and the moment that it was near enough to the rampart, a drawbridge was dropped from its upper story to the top of the wall. Over this bridge rushed the besiegers, and a terrible contest was carried on. Of course the defenders did not sit quietly while the tower was being moved up. They threw upon it what was called Greek fire in the hope of setting it ablaze. Greek fire is thought to have been made of asphalt, nitre, and sulphur. Wherever it was thrown, there

it stuck. It did little damage to these towers, however, for their makers had covered them carefully with plates of metal or with raw hides. Storms of arrows were shot by both sides; but the men in the tower were so well protected by its walls that little harm was done them. When the tower was in place and the bridge down, the besiegers had one great advantage, for they could march out a whole column from the tower, while the defenders had seldom room on the wall for more than a thin line.

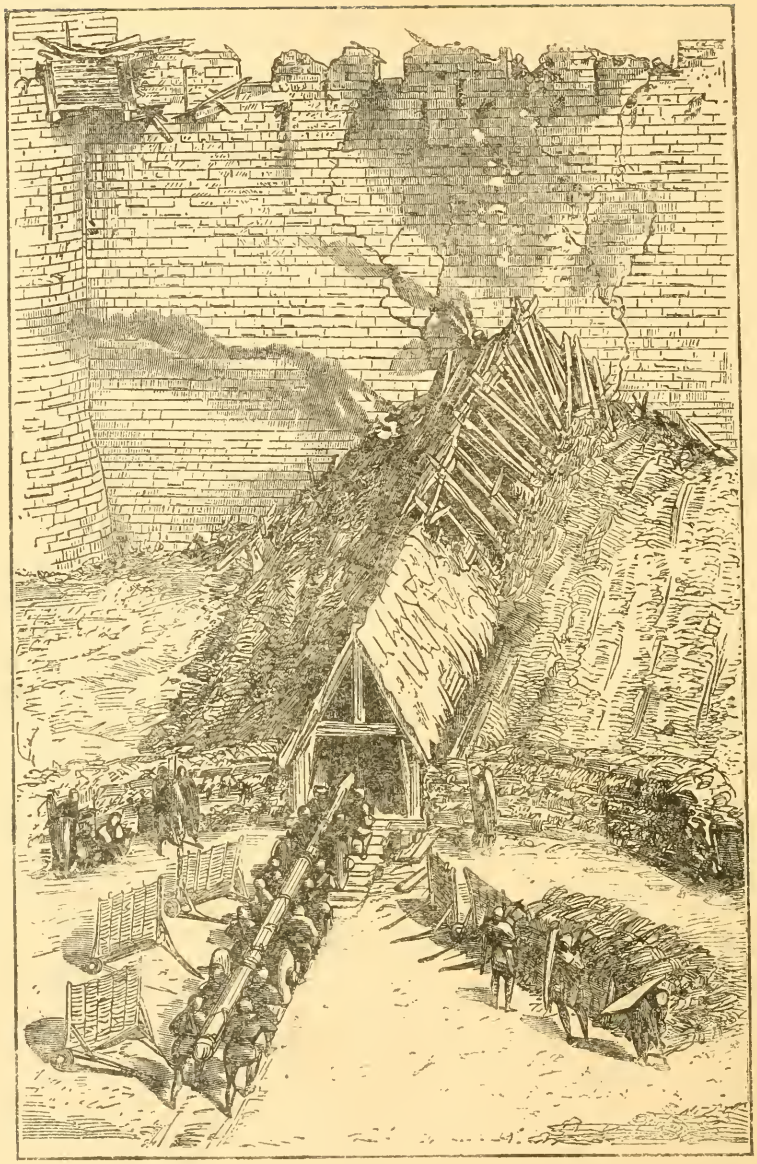
A third way of attacking a castle was by attempting to undermine the walls. If these rested upon so rocky a foundation as that of the "Saucy Castle," the matter was far more difficult; but if the ground was soft, a mine, or passage underground, could be begun at some distance away and dug under the very base of the wall. Beams were put in to support the wall, and straw, twigs, and dry wood were heaped up under them. The miners set this on fire and crept out of the hole as fast as possible. As soon as the beams were burned through, the wall above them generally fell, and through the breach the besiegers rushed in with good hope of winning a victory. Mining did not always go on so smoothly, however, for it often happened that some one within the castle had ears so quick that he heard noises underground and sus-

pected what was being done. Then a counter-mine was dug from within outward in the hope of intercepting the other mine. The two passages sometimes met, and the fighting between the men underground was most furious and savage.

If the castle had a firm rocky foundation, the only possible way to undermine the wall was by the use of the pickaxe. This was not easy when the defenders behind the parapets were shooting arrows and great stones and dropping boiling water or oil or melted lead down through the openings between the machicolations; and if it was to succeed, there must be some sort of protection for the men with the pickaxes. This protection was called the "cat," or in some places the "rat." It was shaped like a long, narrow house with side walls. The roof sloped sharply, so that the heavy stones and beams that would be thrown upon it from the top of the wall might roll off harmlessly. To protect it from fire, it was often covered with iron, and over this raw hides or wet earth was laid. Then, too, men within the structure were always on guard with long forks or poles whose ends were covered with pieces of wet blanket to thrust off firebrands. This was built in some place out of range of the arrows and stones and then moved up close to the

wall. Under its shelter men could work in safety. They had a valuable tool in what was known as a "bosson." This was a battering ram, a long, heavy beam with an iron head. It was on wheels, and when the besiegers rolled it up and dashed it against the wall, it struck with terrific force. The defenders on the top of the wall tried to break its head off by dropping heavy stones and timbers upon it; but the besiegers leaned strong poles against the wall in such a way that these slid off harmlessly. The attempt to set it afire was usually hopeless, for it was kept thoroughly wet and was covered with mud. Sometimes, however, a narrow tunnel was dug as quietly as possible from within the fort out under the cat, and a barrel or two of Greek fire slipped beneath it. Then the defenders on the wall watched eagerly to see the flames burst out. They might well count the moments, for at any instant the stone work under their feet might crumble.

All this time both besiegers and defenders were constantly firing arrows at each other by hand and also by machines called "balistas" which were like immense crossbows and shot great arrows and javelins with tremendous force. To protect themselves from these the besiegers used bucklers and also a sort of screen called a "mantelet"



THE BOSSON

which they moved before them on wheels. In the screen was a narrow slit through which they could send back a return fire. In the fourteenth century cannon were used to some extent, but they could fire only three or four shots an hour and had an unpleasant custom of exploding. Outside a fort, they were of some little value; but when the besieged ventured to mount them on the walls, the chief damage done was to their owners. Their recoil loosened the stones of the wall and frequently the cannon ingloriously rolled off. The most important machines were those for throwing stones, and these as well as the balistas were used by both besiegers and besieged. They were exceedingly powerful. Some of them could hurl for six hundred feet a stone weighing three hundred pounds. If they could only have worked rapidly, they would have done an immense amount of damage; but it took several days to set one up, and the best of them could throw only a few stones in an hour. Moreover, it was impossible to take accurate aim. One of these machines was called a trébuchet. It consisted of two uprights connected at the top by a bar. Resting on the bar was a ponderous beam. The shorter arm of this beam was heavily weighted; by using much force, the longer arm was slowly pulled down to the ground, and in a sort of

sling fastened to it a great stone was placed or perhaps a barrel of Greek fire. Then it was suddenly let go. The short arm dropped, and the stone was hurled with tremendous power. There were other machines, the mangonel, catapult, espringal, etc., but they were not very dissimilar, and most of them resembled in principle either the balista or the trébuchet.

Many romantic descriptions of taking castles have been written, but the real thing had little of romance about it. In a real siege the air was full of heavy stones, javelins, arrows, and darts, some bearing masses of blazing pitch and tow with occasionally perhaps an arrow carrying a message from a traitor either within or without the walls to the opposing party, of barrels of the terrible Greek fire, of smoke from burning roofs and galleries and of crumbling mortar from falling ramparts. There was a wild and horrid confusion of terrible sounds, the din of armor, the shouting of battle cries, the groaning of dying men and the crash of falling stones and timbers and crumbling walls. Men shrieked in agony as they were burned by the boiling oil or melted pitch or blinded by the unslacked lime poured down upon them from the walls. The moat ran red with blood. Such was a real assault upon a castle in the Middle Ages.

How to Capture a Castle

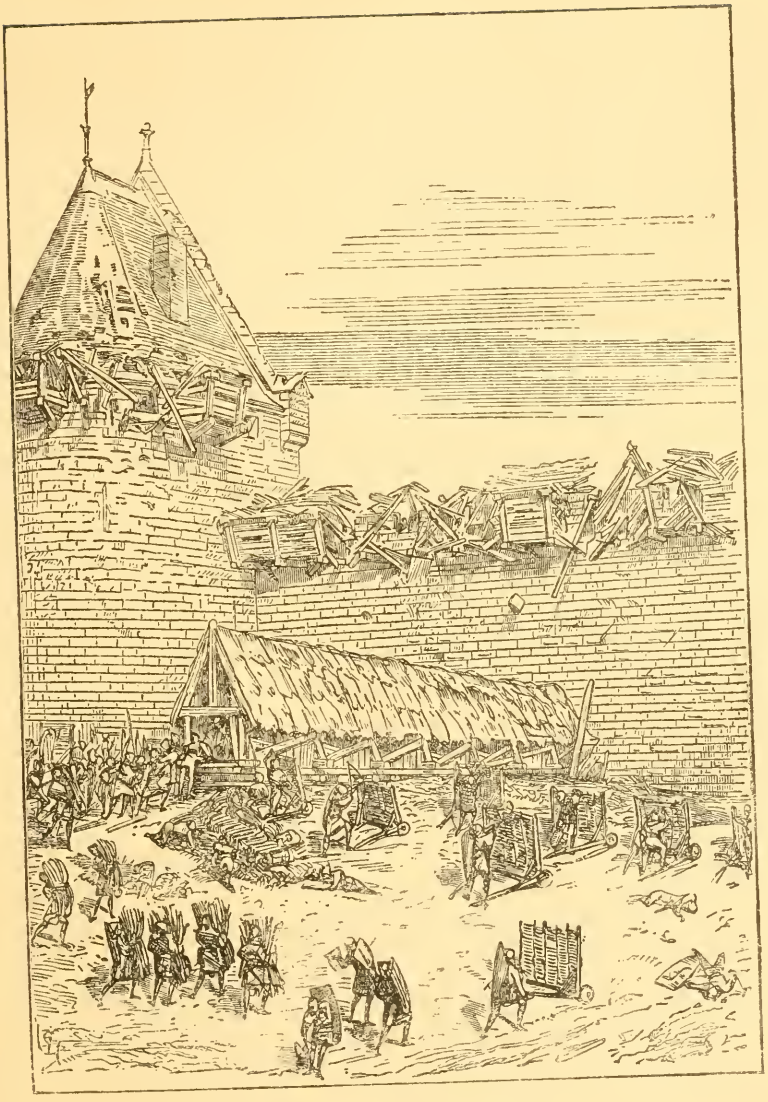
The story of the fall of the Château Gaillard is full of interest. It was a pet child of King Richard, and in 1198 he called it "my fair daughter of one year old." King Philip of France declared, "I would take it if its walls were of iron." Richard retorted, "And I could hold it if they were of butter." Perhaps he could have done so, but one year later he was dead, and his brother John, who followed him, was a man of quite different mettle. Philip captured one after another of the Norman castles held by the English king, and at last he laid siege to Château Gaillard, the strongest of them all. This was early in the autumn of 1203. He captured the neighboring villages and then, having cut off all supplies, settled down quietly before the Castle to wait till its inmates should be hungry enough to surrender. "They are young birds who will have to fly when spring comes," he said contentedly.

A few months later, however, Philip became tired of watching. He succeeded in undermining the wall of the outer court and captured it. Among his followers was a poor man by the name of Ralph who was nicknamed Bogis, or the Snub-nose. Whatever may have been the shape of his nose, he had keen eyes. He noticed a little window, M, and began to wonder if he could not climb in

and open the way for the others. He and a few trusty comrades crept softly around the court until they stood under this window. Ralph stood upon the shoulders of one of his companions and looked in. No one was on guard at that place, and there were no protecting bars. He scrambled in, and found himself in either the chapel or a storehouse connected with it. The defenders discovered that their enemies were in the building and foolishly set fire to it. The flames spread and the garrison escaped to the inner court. Then Ralph let down the drawbridge and the besiegers poured in. So it was that by the keenness and daring of one man this middle court was taken. Such a deed as that was not left unrewarded, and to Ralph was given a "knight's fee," that is, sufficient land to maintain properly a knight and his followers.

The inner court alone remained in the hands of the defenders. Philip's men moved up a cat over the causeway at I, and in its shelter a mine was dug under the walls. A machine for throwing stones followed the cat. A breach was made in the heavy masonry and the besiegers rushed in. The defenders were overpowered, and after a siege of six months the "Saucy Castle" fell.

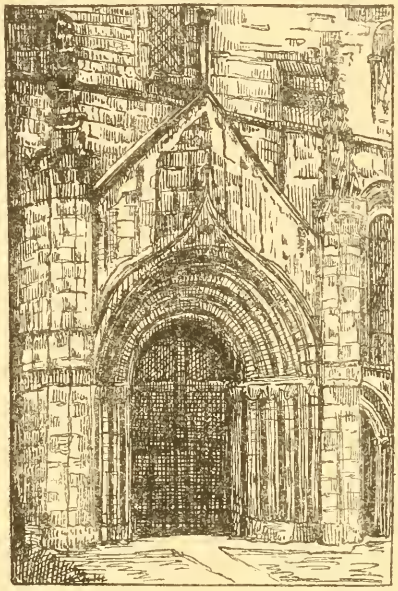
The Middle Ages were a time of almost constant war-



THE CAT

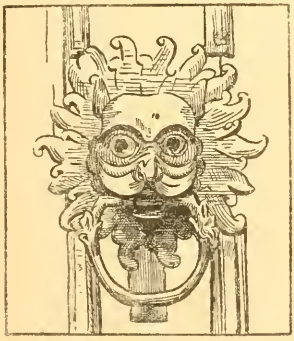
fare. There were quarrels between kings, between kings and their barons, and among the barons themselves; and all these quarrels implied fighting. The poor suffered severely, and the Church came to their rescue. The French bishops tried their best to bring about what was called the Peace of God. High and low were bidden to take an oath to refrain from making war. This served as some little protection for churches, priests, and laborers; but, powerful as the Church was, it could not oblige the unruly barons to take the oath or keep it if it had been taken. Then the Church very wisely lessened her demands and called upon one and all to set apart certain portions of the year to be free from bloodshed. These were from Wednesday evening to Monday morning in every week, about twenty feast days of saints, and the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. The bishops and the rulers of France and to some degree of Germany, Italy, Spain, and England supported this decree, and as far as possible those who broke the rule were punished. The archbishop of Cologne made a rule that if this law was violated by any noble, his heirs might seize his property. A boy under twelve who fought was to be whipped; if over twelve, he was to lose one hand. This rule of peace was called the Truce of God, and

often as it was broken, it nevertheless did much to quiet the turbulent lands and protect the poor and helpless.



SANCTUARY DOOR

Another way in which the Church tried to aid the oppressed was by establishing "sanctuaries," or holy places wherein it was forbidden to shed blood. In those stormy times, if a man was supposed to have wronged another, that other pursued him, sword in hand. But if he took refuge in a church, he was safe; for the clergy would keep him until some terms had been made between the two. This was called the right of sanctuary. It was an excellent thing so long as there was little real authority in the land; but after it had become established that an accused man would be brought to



KNOCKER

trial, then the right often became an occasion of wrong. If a man who had fled to a sanctuary would confess, he was allowed to "abjure the realm," that is, to swear to depart from the land and never return, a punishment which was a little hard on the neighboring countries. If he refused to confess, the law was helpless; for the clergy would brook no interference with their right of giving shelter and protection. The result was that a man who carefully planned a murder and was shrewd enough to commit it within easy reach of a church could escape; while one who committed a crime on the spur of the moment had far less chance to avoid the penalty. Nevertheless, the right of sanctuary was not entirely abolished in England until the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER V

Daily Life in a Castle

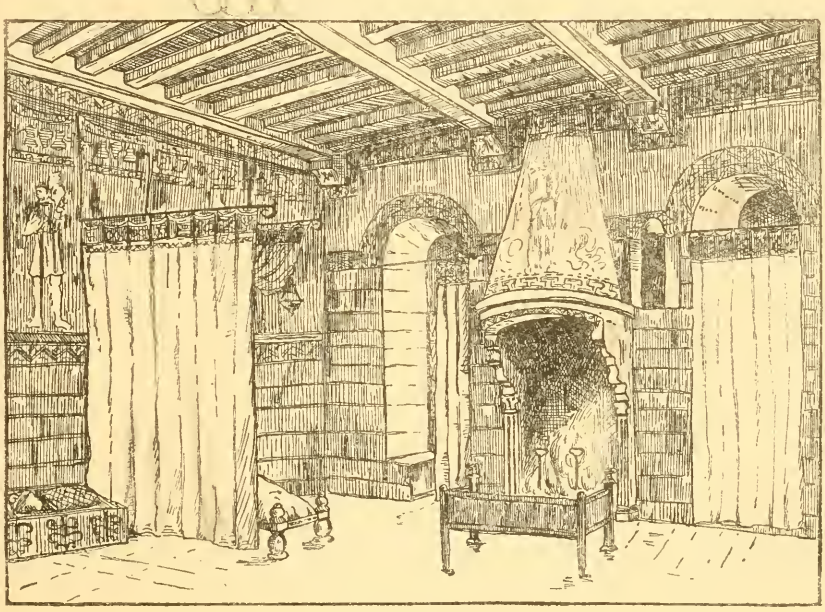
The Château Gaillard was built primarily for a fortification; but in general a castle was meant for a dwelling-place as well as a fortress, and its keep was the home of the master and his family. Their life was not always so narrow and cramped as one might fancy. Some castles, to be sure, consisted of little more than a single strong tower and a moat; but in others the outer court was large enough to contain not only a garden, a poultry yard, and a watermill, but also a lake or fishpond for a time of siege, an orchard, and even cultivated fields. This outer court was sometimes almost like a village, for there was often a forge, a bakery, a carpenter's shop, a falconry, and a stable, besides houses and a church. In the inner court there was frequently a chapel also; but this church more than once served a double purpose. It was sure to suffer if the castle was stormed; and then a messenger was let down from the postern gate to make his way to friends and report that a sacrilegious enemy was attacking the Church of God. If they would then win the

favor of the Church authorities, they must hasten to the rescue.

The centre of the daily life of the castle was the large room known as the hall. This varied greatly at different times and in different places. In the earlier days, the hall was only a bare room with some flat stones in the centre. On these meat was cooked, and the smoke found its way out through a hole in the roof as best it could. As time passed and towers were built of several stories, fireplaces with flues were made. The floor was tiled and strewn with rushes. The walls were hung with banners, tapestry, and standards bright with armorial bearings. Here and there were shields and armor or a cluster of lances. Long oaken tables with wooden benches stood ready for use, or else before each meal trestles were brought in, and boards were laid upon them, for in those days "the festive board" was a literal board. The table of the master of the castle stood at one end of the hall. This place was called the dais. At the opposite end of the room was a wooden gallery for musicians, built halfway up the wall.

When bedtime came, coarse mattresses were laid on the floor; for here the people of the household and their guests were to pass the night. The bed of the noble and his wife stood at the farther end of the hall, separated

from the rest of the room by curtains; but later, when other stories were added, a room for them and also other bedrooms were built, some on the upper floors and some in the thickness of the walls. In the simpler castles the



A BED-CHAMBER

furnishings of these bedrooms were few and plain, hardly more than one or more beds, a bench or two, and a wooden chest; but in the dwellings of the wealthy there was considerable display. The posts of the beds were sometimes gilded, inlaid with ivory, or ornamented with precious stones; and the bed coverings were of silk or fur

with a golden fringe. There was also a wardrobe made gorgeous with bright colors. The chests were handsomely carved, and for jewels there were smaller chests covered with leather. Frequently there was in one corner a richly ornamented shrine enclosing a relic of some saint. It is said that in Italy the beds were often put high up on trestles to escape the rats and mice.

There was a certain rude magnificence about the place, but there was not what the people of to-day would call comfort. For instance, those heavy stone walls must have been cold, but in England, even so late as the fifteenth century, a fire in one's bedroom was regarded as a foolish indulgence ; and the rooms were certainly not so light as we wish our rooms to be. It was not safe to make the windows too large, and even a window of generous size would not let in much sunshine if cut into a wall ten or fifteen feet in thickness. The rooms were often made more cheerful, however, by decorations of red and yellow and blue, or by paintings of flowers and leaves, conventionally treated and decidedly crude, but bright and cheery.

In those wardrobes and richly carved chests in the bedrooms there was no lack of expensive clothes. In the fourteenth century England tried her best to keep her

people from extravagance in dress and to oblige them to wear goods of English weaving. Parliament decreed that no one but the king, queen, and their children should be allowed to wear imported cloth, and that no one should wear foreign furs or silks unless he had a yearly rent of £100. In the fourteenth century, £100 would buy as much as several times that amount to-day, so that a man had to be very well to do before the law would permit him and his family to dress as they chose.

COSTUME OF TIME OF CHARLES III

The fashions changed as extremely, if not quite so rapidly, as to-day. Toward the end of this century, English ladies wore tight-fitting dresses with long, full skirts. The sleeves were tight, extending down to the knuckles, and with sixty or seventy buttons on each arm. A few years later, buttons were no longer seen on the sleeves, and the sleeves themselves came only to the wrist. They grew larger and looser, so loose that finally a second pair, made to fit closely, were worn under

them. Tightly fitting jackets were introduced and were worn with full skirts of some other color. The only rule in regard to wearing colors was apparently to have plenty of them. A blue petticoat, displayed by lifting a purple skirt adorned with a broad yellow band and worn with an ermine-trimmed jacket, was evidently regarded as being in most excellent taste; and apparently a combination of long, loose robe of blue, yellow girdle, red cloak, and red shoes was felt to be above criticism. At several periods during the Middle Ages it was in the height of the mode for a lady of rank to wear a dress presenting the coat of arms of her husband's family and her own; but it must have been a wee bit startling to see a noble dame appear in a dress white on one side with some conventional figures in black, and yellow on the other side with a gorgeous red lion rampant for ornament. This costume was completed by a tight blue jacket trimmed with ermine, a close red cap, and a crown.

But of all the remarkable fashions, those pertaining to the headdress were the most astounding. In the thirteenth century and again in later times, married women wore the wimple, that is, a covering of linen or silk arranged in folds over the chin, neck, and the sides of the face; but this gradually disappeared in favor of even

more surprising modes. At one time the hair was put smoothly into a net, often made of thread of gold; then it was so puffed out at the sides that a fashionable lady had the appearance of wearing horns. These grew higher and higher, but at length a steeple-shaped cap took their place. This was followed by one made of wire and various sorts of thin material put together in such a way that the cap stood out on either side of the head like the wings of an enormous butterfly. Another style of headdress was made like a giant cornucopia, and was worn slanting up and back. From this hung a sort of drapery that floated over the shoulders; and from its highest point a long scarf streamed down the lady's back to the floor. One sort of headdress was shaped like a harp, one like a heart, one like a tower with battlements, from the top of which a

COSTUME OF THE 15TH CENTURY

long white veil floated. One was like a large crescent with a generous amount of drapery, and one looked exactly as if two large napkins had been shaken out and hung by their centres over long sticks which in some marvelous way were made to stand firm in my lady's hair.

The heads of the men were free from such wild freaks of fashion, but they, too, delighted in bright colors. A long loose gown of brilliant red, its full sleeves lined with ermine and half concealing another pair which were blue and tight, the trimming of the whole of the most dazzling yellow, was thought to be a quiet but appropriate costume for a king. This garb was completed by a sort of fez worn on the head, red and with red drapery hanging around it well banded with yellow. Small attention was paid to cleanliness. The English thought the French exceedingly extravagant because they changed their ruffles once a week and put on clean shirts once a fortnight.

For men as well as for women strict laws were made, even if they were not strictly obeyed. Toward the end of the fourteenth century serving men in England were forbidden to wear cloth costing more than two marks, that is, sixteen ounces of silver, apiece. Men practicing

any handicraft might wear cloth only and no jewelry; while if their wives ventured to wear any fur save that of lamb, coney, cat, and fox, they were in danger of get-

LADIES OF THE 14TH CENTURY

ting into trouble. Squires whose income from land was two hundred marks a year were allowed to wear cloth of silver and a "reasonable" amount of silver ornamentation. A gentleman with the same income, but not a

squire, was limited to cloth, and even a "reasonable" amount of jewelry was forbidden him. Even a knight with an annual income of £200 was forbidden to wear cloth of gold and the ermine and minever, or perhaps squirrel, that were sacred to royalty. Shoes were worn with pointed toes so long that they had to be fastened to the knees with slender chains of gold or silver. Laws were passed limiting the length of those toes to two inches; but sumptuary laws, as laws concerning dress are called, are rarely obeyed; and while the lawmakers continued to make them, the people moved on serenely and broke as many of them as their purses or their credit would permit. To the humbler folk it was a mark of rising in the world to dress themselves a little more richly than the law permitted; and as for the great folk, it would have been strange enough if these people so independent in other affairs had shown themselves meek and yielding in the matter of the clothes that they put on their own backs and paid for out of their own pockets. The wearers of the crown hardly set them an example of simplicity, for it is said that Richard II had a coat of cloth of gold decorated with precious stones which was worth thirty thousand marks. His nobles had no hesitation in following the lead of their lord, and

it is claimed that one of them had two hundred and fifty "new sutes of apparell of cloth of gold or tissue." Such was the dress of the day, and the sombre old stone walls of the castles must have afforded a most excellent background for its display.

These brilliant costumes were not for everyday wear, however, for even in a fortified castle there were common days and a home life. The hall was the centre of this home life, the general living room, as has been said. Of course its size varied greatly according to the wealth and wishes of the master of the castle. One hall is described as being able to hold one thousand men. Others were small; but whether their dimensions were wide or narrow, the general character did not alter. For seats there were chairs and benches, and sometimes handsome cushions on the floor, and there was always a fireplace, for many generations in the centre of the room, wherein big round logs blazed and glowed. Even the best of fires in an open fireplace, however, are inclined to "burn the face and freeze the back," and the tapestry on the walls served a useful purpose in adding to the comfort of the hall. In the castles of wealthy nobles, these hangings were sometimes made of brocade or cloth of gold and silver brought from the East; but in the fifteenth cen-

tury very handsome tapestries were woven in Europe, especially in Flanders, in what is now called Belgium, and at Arras in northern France. Indeed, the Arras tapestry came into so common use that Shakespeare says "behind the arras," when he means behind the tapestry. Some tapestry was simple, but that which was made for kings and princes and cathedrals was often most elaborate. It pictured scenes from the Bible or from the lives of saints or from hunting and hawking or from some of the romances which were such a delight to the people of the Middle Ages.

Early in the morning the watchman of the castle sounded his horn from the battlements of the keep to say that the sun had risen and all was well. The day was short, for people in general did not sit up very long after the five o'clock supper. The dinner hour was from nine to eleven in the forenoon. In the hall were held the mighty feasts in which the noble appetites of the day so rejoiced. What would a modern caterer say to a bill of fare that began boldly with venison, a quarter of bear, and the shoulder of a wild boar, and worked its way valiantly onward through a course of roasted peacocks and swans, a second of poultry, and a third of waterfowl and small game to venison and pheasant pasties

A DINNER IN THE HALL

and pigeon pie? By the time that this was reached, the feast was fairly under way, and the guests were well prepared for such trifles as shad, salmon, mullet, and eel-pie, the last a special favorite. After this came pastry of all sorts and sweetmeats, then cloves, ginger, and other spices. These made people ravenously thirsty, and they were quite ready for the big cups of wine mixed with honey or spice that now appeared. The young pages of the castle attended upon the guests, but the heavier waiting was done by stalwart serving men.

A feast like this was only a simple repast compared with that served in 1403 at the marriage of Henry IV. There were only six courses, but a course included an amazing collection of eatables. The second course, for instance, comprised venison served with frumenty, a dish made of milk, sugar, and wheat; jelly; sucking pigs; rabbits; bitterns; stuffed hens; partridges; leach, that is, a mixture of cream, sugar, almonds, and isinglass; and boiled meat of some sort. The course ended, as did every course, with what was called a "sotelte," or subtlety. This was somewhat like what is known to-day as a "float," only on a very small scale. One that was served at this feast was an image of a pelican sitting on her nest with her young ones, and beside it Saint Cath-

erine holding a book in her hand and disputing with the doctors. Another much more elaborate was made for the coronation of Henry VI. In this, the Child Jesus sits on his mother's knees. Saint George and Saint Denis kneel one on either side. King Henry bears in his hand a petition for the favor of the "Blessyd Lady, Cristes moder dere." These subtleties were made of sugar or pastry and added much to the interest of the feast. In general, however, the glory of a banquet consisted not in nicety of cooking and elegance of serving, but rather in providing unlimited quantities and countless varieties of food. The peacock and the swan were looked upon as the most luxurious dishes of the age. The peacock was carefully skinned, then roasted; but before he was brought to the table, his skin was fastened around him with skewers. An old recipe for serving the swan is as follows: —

Make a stiff bed of paste about the thickness of your thumb and color it green. Comb it out, and it will look like a meadow of green grass. Take your swan and gild him over with gold; then have a kind of loose, flying cloak of a vermilion color within and painted with arms without; then set the swan upon this bed, cover some part of him with the cloak, stick about him small banners upon little sticks, the banners painted

with the arms most agreeable to the people seated at the table.

As time passed, less meat and more vegetables were used. The bread was of various sorts. In England the best and finest was marked with the figure of Christ and was called "Our Lord's bread." There were at least two grades of bread below this, not counting the "wastel bread," a very coarse brown bread. Wine was much in evidence, but the everyday drinks were different varieties of ale or mead.

The dishes used at table varied as greatly as they do in the homes of to-day. The cups or goblets were handsome when the expense could be afforded. They were made of gold or silver and beautifully ornamented with precious stones. Often a feast was lighted by men ranged along the walls of the room, bearing flaming torches; and the jewels must have gleamed and flashed in the ever-changing glare. People ate from trenchers, or rude plates. At first, thick slices of stale bread were used; then trenchers were made of wood and were kept measurably clean by being scoured with ashes. People of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries were well content to eat two at a trencher. The phrase, "a

valiant trencher man," was the literal description of a man with a good appetite — and appetites *were* good

A KING'S FEAST

in those days. Even in the sixteenth century, Anne Boleyn, wife of Henry VIII, regretted that she could eat for breakfast only half a pound of bacon and drink

only half a tankard of ale. She ascribed her loss of appetite to the late hours that she was keeping, "being scarcely in bed before ten," she lamented.

The serving dishes were made of wood, pewter, silver, or gold, according to the wealth of the master of the castle. Knives and spoons and fingers were used as weapons of table warfare. Forks were in use in Italy, but it was well into the seventeenth century or even later before they became at all common in the other countries of Europe. For a long while they were looked upon in monasteries as a foolish and sinful luxury. An Englishman who traveled in Italy in the early part of the seventeenth century was pleased with the custom, "seeing that all men's fingers are not alike clean," as he said pathetically, and he brought home one of these new implements for his own use; whereupon one, a merry friend of his, persisted in calling him the "furcifer," or fork-bearer. For folk who were not "fork-bearers," water and towels were passed around several times during a feast. The table linen was clean and plentiful; but the floor was covered with rushes, with bones and other refuse, and perhaps had not been swept for twenty years. A feast in a nobleman's castle was a grotesque medley of splendor and filth.

No entertainment was looked upon as complete without music. This was provided by minstrels. They used a sort of violin, and also the harp, lute, guitar, bagpipe, flute, and double-flute, horn, and trumpet, and sometimes the drum, tambourine, cymbals, and handbells. A noble usually had one or more minstrels in his service,

THE MUSICIANS

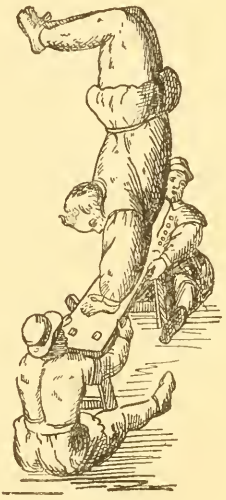
who wore at their girdles his badge, a little scutcheon engraved with his coat of arms. While the great folk feasted, the minstrels played and sang, sometimes in their own gallery, sometimes, on less formal occasions, from seats on the floor, or even on the edge of the table. They sang merry little ballads and favorite bits from the longer poems glorifying the noble deeds of heroes, and they also gave long recitations from the romances that the people of those times found so thrillingly entertaining.

Besides the minstrels who were members of noble households, there were also the wandering singers, some of good family, who became minstrels for a time in order to gratify a taste for roving. Many of these had real talent, and they roamed through the lands, sure of a friendly greeting, a cup of wine, and a generous meal

THE JUGGLERS

wherever they might go. If the minstrel's songs were pleasing to the lord of the castle, the singer went away rejoicing in a goodly sum of money. If neither the lord nor his guests were liberally inclined, many minstrels were not above stopping in the midst of their song or story and saying, "If you wish to hear any more of this poem, you must make haste to open your purses." Minstrels were free to go where they would, for all classes of people welcomed them. It is told of Alfred the

Great that he disguised himself as a wandering singer and went fearlessly into the camp of his enemies. Whether this is doubtful or not in the case of Alfred, it was certainly true in many other cases; for at the sound of a harp or violin the good folk of the Middle Ages seemed to lay aside all caution and forget all danger.



ACROBATS

Besides music, other entertainment was provided for the guests at these banquets by jugglers, or sleight-of-hand performers, who went through acrobatic feats and the old tricks of balancing weights on long poles, tossing up balls and keeping several up in the air at the same time, exhibiting trained bears, and carrying on any sort of jesting that seemed to amuse their audience. A similar entertainment was provided by the "fool" of the castle, for kings and wealthy men were in the habit of keeping a jester who was known by that name. He often wore a cap and bells or a costume half one color and half another, or even shaved half his hair and half his beard to suit the rather crude ideas of what was considered comical. His joking was frequently coarse

and rough, but it was to the point, for only a keen, shrewd man could play well the part of fool. In Shakespeare's dramas it happens more than once that the fool manifests more closeness of observation and more common sense than any one else in the play.

A JESTER

Among these strolling companies of singers and jugglers there were also women dancers, who met with great favor. The popular notion of a dexterous dancer was one who could support herself on her hands while her feet were high up in the air. If she could rest her hands on two swords and still maintain her equilibrium, that was indeed skill,

and the spectators shouted their applause and threw their coins with delight.

But the hall was far more than a mere place of feasting. Here sat the lady of the castle and her maidens,

A BEDROOM PARTY

daughters of other noble families who had come to her to learn housewifery just as their brothers had come to her husband to learn to become knights. These young girls were taught to manage a household, to sew and embroider, to card wool and spin and weave. They learned

to say the prayers of the Church, to sing, and to play simple accompaniments on the harp or viol. A little of astronomy too, they learned, enough at least to name a few of the constellations; possibly a little of reading and writing, and more than a little of falconry. They must ride well, of course, for to make a poor appearance in the hunting field or in practicing the "mystery of rivers" would be indeed a disgrace. One thing they were taught with especial thoroughness, and that was enough of surgery and medicine and nursing to care for a wounded knight. Somewhat of warfare, too, they must know; for when the lord of the castle was away, it was his wife who must command the men at arms and either save or lose her home. The girls of the castle played checkers, chess, backgammon, and battledoor and shuttlecock, they had their pet birds, magpies, larks, and sometimes parrots, or popinjays, as they were called. Falcons were pets as well as hunters, and often made their entrance into society

LADY AT LOOM

perched upon the wrists of their mistresses. The maidens of the Middle Ages liked to go on picnics, to dance, and to wear their best clothes; they enjoyed putting on jeweled belts and pretty ornaments and soft furs and dainty silks just as much as any girls of to-day, and they were just as delighted when there was to be a tournament as girls are to-day at the prospect of any entertainment.

FALCONRY

All sorts of folk came into the hall. In many places the poor of the neighborhood came every morning to ask for bread. If any fighting was near at hand — and the chief business of the time was fighting and hunting — a wounded man often made his way to the castle to beg for help and care. Sometimes, as has been said, a knight errant called to the porter at the gate and bade him bear a friendly challenge to the other knights within the walls. Then followed a delightful confusion. The lists were staked out in some meadow near the castle or perhaps in the outer court. The crowd of followers and

dependents of the lord flocked about the ropes, and the ladies of the castle waved bright-colored scarfs from windows and battlements. Vassals, or those who held land of the master of the castle on condition of service, came to "pay homage," that is, to kneel before him, their hands clasped in his, and promise to be faithful to him. Trav-

LADIES PLAYING GAMES

eling merchants came to open their packs and reveal the dazzling fabrics of the East. Pilgrims who had wandered through many lands in order to visit some holy place were always going to and fro and always welcome. When ten or eleven o'clock had come, the horn was blown, the long tables were spread, and all gathered around them, whether rich or poor, noble or simple. Those to

whom special honor was to be shown were seated "above the salt," that is, near the lord's end of the table and separated from the common folk by an elaborate salt-cellar. After the meal, there were games — chess, backgammon, cards, and checkers — and also music and danc-

DANCING

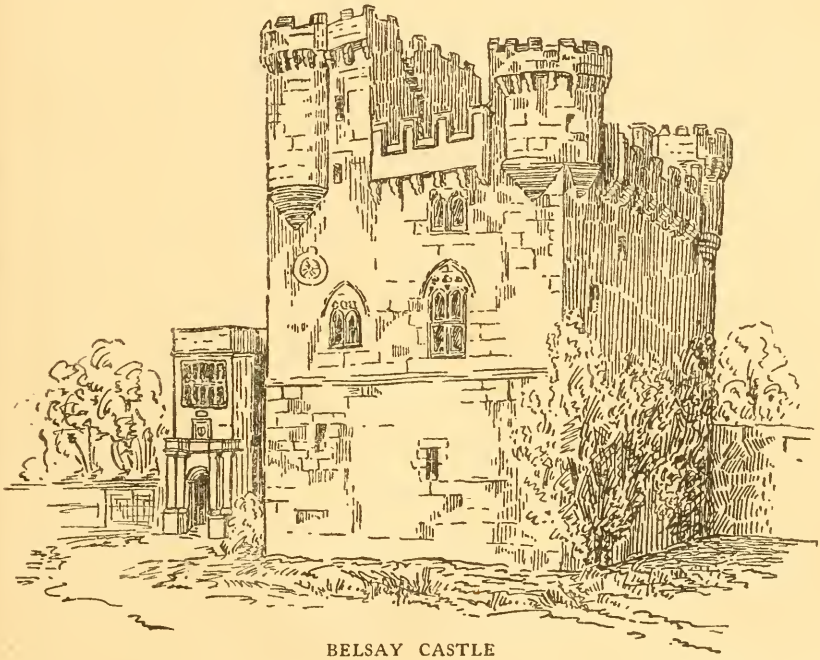
ing. Every visitor had some story to tell; the dogs lay about the hearth, and now and then one pricked up his ears and wagged his tail sleepily when he heard his master praise some exploit of his in the hunt. The flames blazed up merrily, and the gloomy hall became bright and cheerful. It was the very heart of home, and when a wounded knight lay dying in some foreign land, it was his own hall, which he should never see again, of which he thought with eager longing.

CHAPTER VI

Life on a Manor

During the greater part of the Middle Ages, most of the land was held by "feudal tenure," that is, on condition of service. Everybody needed service of some sort. A king might own vast areas of land; but unless the nobles would fight for him, he could not keep it from his enemies. The nobles might hold wide estates, but they were worthless unless men could be found to cultivate them. As for the "common people," their first and foremost need was protection. So it was that the feudal system grew up. The king would agree to grant land to a noble provided the noble would become his "vassal." To do this, the noble was obliged to go to the king's court and kneel before him. The king then held the clasped hands of the noble in his own and asked, "Do you wish to become my man?" The noble replied, "I do." The king then kissed him in token of confidence and acceptance, and the noble took a solemn oath on the Gospels or relics of the saints to be faithful. This ceremony was called "doing homage."

It bound the king to aid and protect the noble and not to interfere with his control of the land in his hands. It bound the noble to be faithful to the king and to fight for him when fighting was necessary, and to pro-



BELSAY CASTLE

vide at his own expense a fixed number of followers. For the king to demand money and for the noble to pay it would have seemed to both of them somewhat humiliating; but to follow his king in battle and to be loyal to him was quite in accordance with the taste and

training of the noble. Even in later times, as the demand for a military force increased, the king did not venture to suggest paying wages to knights to fight for him. Instead of that, "money-fiefs" were invented; that is, a fixed sum was paid to vassals yearly on condition of their performing military service. This was exactly the same as hiring soldiers, but calling the arrangement a fief, the name given to a grant of land, saved the pride of the knights, and gave the king his soldiers.

The military service required of a vassal was generally limited to forty days in a year. If more was needed, the king must pay all expenses. If the military service was to be rendered in a foreign country, the noble was free to come home at the end of forty days. He must also help the king by his advice, and must submit in any lawsuit of his own to the decision of the king and his fellow vassals, and he must provide entertainment for the king when on a journey. On three occasions he was expected to assist the king with money, but this was never called payment or rent for land, it was always spoken of as "aid." These occasions were: 1. When the king's eldest son was made a knight; 2. When the king's eldest daughter was married; 3. When the king had been taken prisoner by some foreign power and it was necessary to ransom him.

In theory, the king had a right to take back the grant of land; but unless a vassal was unfaithful, it was seldom to his advantage to do so. If one vassal was wronged by another, he might appeal to their king; but it was in most cases a long way to the royal court, it was dangerous to leave one's castle exposed to an enemy, and it was more simple and direct for the two nobles to fight it out. If a vassal died, it was generally for the gain of both parties that his eldest son should take the father's place as vassal. The lord imposed a tax, however, called "heriot," usually the best beast of the dead man. The son, too, was required to pay a tax, or "relief," on taking possession of the land in his father's stead. The accepted belief was that every fief should supply to the king the service of a man. If the vassal's son was a child at his father's death, the king brought him up; but to make good the loss of a fighting man, he kept the income of the fief until the boy was old enough to perform a knight's service. If the vassal left only a widow or a daughter, she must pay a fine to the king if she did not wish to marry. If she was willing to marry, the king had the right to select her husband. This was to prevent her from choosing a man who might perhaps be an enemy to the king.

This was the "feudal system," or rather it was the beginning of it. It is quite probable that in many countries, at some time in their history, land has been held by this method. Of course it was not decided upon and the land divided in a moment in any country, but the custom grew up gradually. The system was in reality a perfect network of lords and vassals, for not only were the nobles vassals of the king, but they themselves had vassals, and those vassals had others who had paid homage to them. Indeed, a man might do homage to a number of men for separate pieces of land. In that case, however, he owed military duty to but one of them, and this one was known as his "liege" lord. The vassal was not looked upon as in any degree inferior to the lord. A king might rule one country and yet pay homage to the ruler of another for his fief in that land. When William the Norman conquered England, he took possession of the country much as if it had been his own big farm. He allowed those who yielded to him to retain their land on payment of large fees. The rest of it he divided among his followers as fiefs. But William was Duke of Normandy, and therefore he himself paid homage to the French king for his Norman land. This descended from one English ruler to another; but when

John came to the throne, the French king, Philip II, declared that he was a disobedient and unfaithful vassal, and took it away by capturing the Château Gaillard and his other strongholds.

There were several ways in which smaller amounts of land came into the hands of the nobles. The Church held large areas; but the clergy were forbidden to wield the sword, therefore parts of their holdings were sometimes let to knights on condition of their providing the required number of soldiers. Again, this was a time of fighting and bloodshed, of danger and violence; and many a man who owned a bit of freehold could not protect it. In that case he would often "commend" himself to some powerful man; that is, he would promise to be faithful to him and be his loyal vassal. He now had a strong arm to defend him, and he was sure of food and clothes. The result of all this was that by the thirteenth century it might almost be said, "No land without a lord."

But manors were of small value unless they were cultivated. In these days, if a man owns a large farm, he hires laborers to work on it; but in the Middle Ages the cultivation of the land was managed in quite a different fashion. Nothing has been said as yet of the "common

folk," the many thousand people who were neither clergy nor nobles. They were the ones who did the work of the manors. They were of various ranks. A few were slaves, and were looked upon as having no more rights than a horse or a cow. Above these were the villeins. They could not be sold like slaves, but if a manor passed from one lord to another, they went with it. Each villein held a definite amount of land, and was required to pay for its use partly in money or in produce and partly in labor. The villeins were divided into several classes, each having some special rights or some exemption from undesirable duties which was of great value to them. Above these were the free tenants. They paid for the use of their land, sometimes in service and sometimes entirely in money.

The buildings on a manor were the manor house, in which either the lord or his agent lived; the tiny cottages of the tenants; a church; a windmill; and the various barns and other outbuildings needed. The manor house stood a little apart from the others. It was usually of stone, but its character depended in great degree upon the location. In England, for instance, the important houses near the Scottish border were built strong enough to serve as forts; and, indeed, most of the larger houses in the more

CROWHURST PLACE, SHOWING MOAT

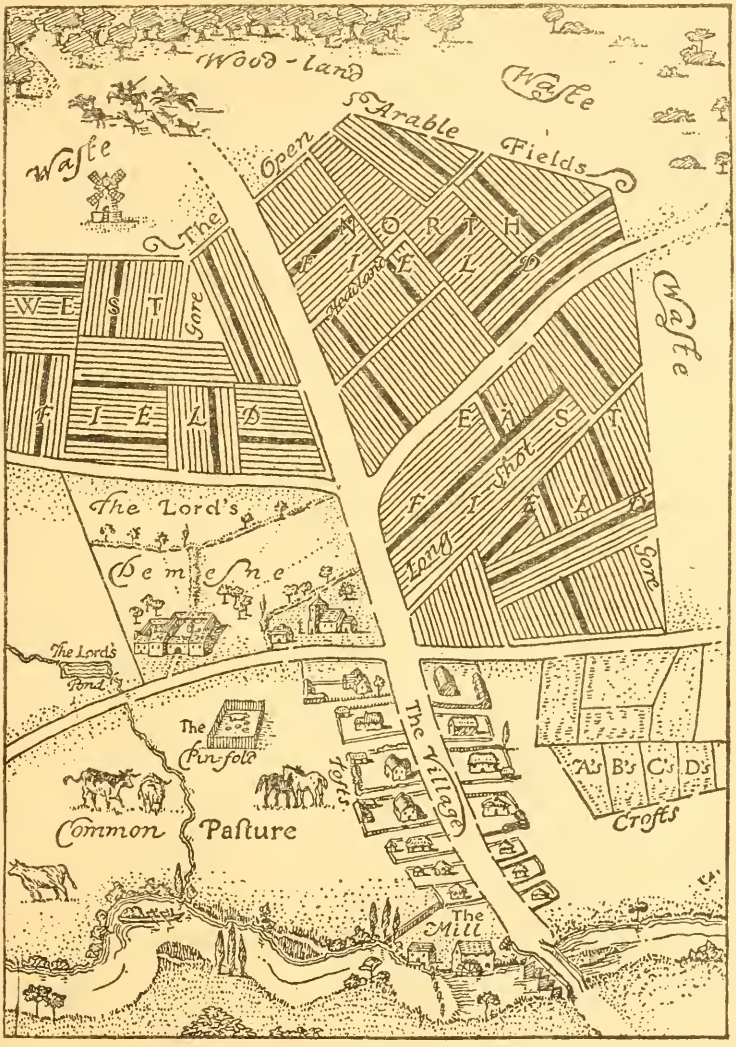
level parts of the country were surrounded by moats and had various means of defense. In the simpler houses there was a hall, and adjoining it a kitchen. On the other side of the hall and up a flight of stairs was the "solar." This was the bedroom and parlor of the lord and his wife. The rest of the household and their guests slept in the hall or in the stables or in any other place where they would be under a roof, even one thatched with reeds from the pond. As time passed, houses were built with more rooms, often enough to enclose a courtyard on three sides, while the fourth was shut in by a wall. Around the whole structure was a moat with a drawbridge. The windows were small, there were turrets and other places from which arrows might be shot in safety; in short, these manor houses were in many respects almost as well fortified as real castles. The cottages were ranged along the one street of the manor, miserable little one-room sheds of clay, the roofs thatched with straw stubble and having neither windows nor chimneys.

The land of the manor was cultivated in three large fields. Usually one produced wheat or barley and one oats, while the third lay fallow. The second year the field that had lain fallow was planted, and another field had a time of rest. This was an extravagant manner of

farming, for one third of the land was always idle, but men had not fully learned how to enrich the soil, and therefore they were forced to allow it to rest. Each tenant had a larger or smaller share in these fields; but the land was divided in a peculiar fashion. It was marked off into long, narrow strips, generally about forty rods long and four rods wide, separated from one another by strips of unploughed turf called "balks." The holdings of the different tenants were scattered over the manor, and much time must have been wasted in going from one to another. A man who held thirty acres, or a virgate, might have to care for land in thirty or more different places. Even the land which the lord of the manor reserved for himself was scattered in the same way. The use of clover and the grasses which can be cultivated in dry places and stored away for winter was not known, therefore the meadow land of the manor was of great value. There was always a common pasture in which sheep and cattle might range; and there was woodland, wherein the tenants' pigs might find food for themselves.

The tenants were obliged to grind their grain in the lord's mill, bake their bread in his oven, press their grapes in his winepress, and of course pay a good price for the

privileges. They must pay for letting their pigs run in the forest, for cutting wood, and often for catching fish, and for the use of their lord's weights and measures. They paid him a share of what they raised, and they paid one tenth of their income to the Church besides fees at every birth, baptism, marriage, and death. Even what was left of their produce they were forbidden to sell until the produce of their lord's land had been sold. This land, or the "demesne," they were obliged to cultivate, each villein doing an amount of work in proportion to the area which he held. The lists of the men and the work required of each were called "extents." An extent usually stated, first, the size of the manor and how it was divided, how many acres of arable land, pasture, meadow, and woodland it contained, and how often the manor court was accustomed to meet. Then came the list of the tenants, what rent they paid, and what work was required of them. On one of the English manors, for instance, there were seven free tenants. One of them was the son of a knight. He held eighteen acres and paid for his land thirty-six pence a year. Apparently these free tenants were not obliged to do any work on the demesne. Some of the villein tenants, however, had to do so many kinds of work that it is a wonder how they knew when it



PLAN OF A MANOR

was finished. One poor man had to work for his land three days a week for eleven months of the year, save for a week at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, and find his own food. He must weed, help plough and mow, carry in hay, reap, and haul grain. It was carefully stated just when the lord would provide food for him and how much and what kind. When this man and the other villeins were mowing, they were allowed three bushels of wheat, one ram worth eighteen pence, one jar of butter, and one cheese "next to the best from the dairy of the lord," and salt and oatmeal for their porridge, and all the morning milk. They had also several definite perquisites while they were doing this work; for instance, at the close of each day every man might have as much green grass as he could carry on the point of his scythe; and when the hay was in, he might have a cartful. At harvest time, each worker might have three handfuls for every load of grain that he brought in. Besides the weekly work during the greater part of the year, there were also "boon-works" in time of ploughing, planting, and harvest. For these, the tenant must leave his own land, often when it needed him most, and give his time to that of his lord. In short, more than one half of the time of the average villein had to be given to

the lord of the manor. Just how some of the dues were paid is a little confusing. One tenant, for instance, was bound to pay the lord every Christmas "one hen and a half, the hen being of the price of one and one half pence." Several women held land on the same terms as the men. The extent also stated the value of the rents, the hens given to the lord, the use of the mill, the right to fish, and all the service performed by the tenants; and it told where the pillory and ducking-stool stood. In this case, there was more than one reason to avoid these instruments of punishment, for they were placed next to the lord's pigstye.

Legal questions often arose on a manor, land was transferred from one person to another, fines were to be imposed, crimes were to be punished, and to decide these matters a court was held regularly. This was convenient for the tenants, but it can hardly have been invariably just, for the lord or his agent was the judge, and he generally had a personal interest in the cases. Moreover, the various fines and fees went straight into his own purse, and that must have made it a temptation to inflict as heavy ones as would be borne. In theory, there could be an appeal to the king; but the king was usually a long way off, travel was not safe, and in any case the

word of a villein would count little when opposed to the word of a noble.

A manor did not run itself. It had three chief officials besides its lord. First, there was the reeve. He was one of the tenants, and his business was to carry on the cultivation of the lord's land. Then there was the bailiff, who took charge of the whole manor, saw that the work was done and the produce sold. But a noble often held a number of manors, and so a steward was also required, who went from one manor to another to examine the accounts of each, hold court, and take general charge of the estates. So it was that the reeve watched the tenants, the bailiff watched the reeve, the steward watched the bailiff; and finally an accountant, sometimes a relative of the lord, watched the steward and collected the money from the different manors. Over them all was the lord himself. He and his family and servants went from one manor to another, partly to use up what they could of produce on the spot, and partly, it is whispered, because so little attention was paid to cleanliness that it was the part of comfort as well as wisdom to allow a house to "sweeten" after it had been occupied for some weeks.

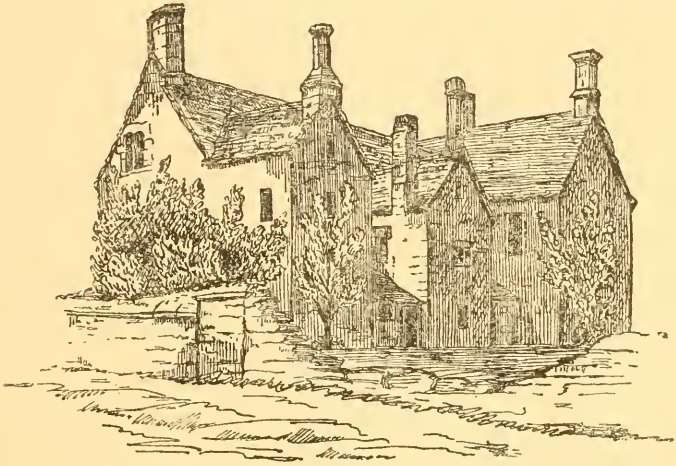
A manor required far less from the outside world

than any village or city in these days. Food, with the exception of salt and the delicacies brought for the use of the lord, grew on the land. Hemp and wool were raised, spun into yarn, woven, and made into clothes on the spot. Sandals could be made by any one, and rough shoes could be put together by the shoemaker of the manor. There was also a carpenter, who could easily put up the wattled huts of the tenants. If anything more elaborate was to be undertaken, like the building of a church, builders were sent for from away. The blacksmith mended the tools and farming implements and often made them. Clumsy, inconvenient things they were. The scythes were short and straight, and the sickles small and heavy. The great wooden ploughs were so big and cumbersome that even with eight oxen to pull them they cut into the ground only a little way, and a second ploughing was usually necessary. Enriching the land and draining the soil were rarely practiced during the earlier part of the Middle Ages. Crops at best were small, often not more than one third of what the same amount of land would produce to-day. Frequently they failed almost altogether, because so little was known of agriculture; and even when there was a year of plenty, it was hardly safe to sell the surplus, for it

might all be needed during the following year. The tenant had a hard life, but he was sure of as much protection as his lord could give, of a place to stay in, and of an opportunity to raise something to eat. He had no freedom, but in the times when freedom means danger, one does not grieve so sorely over the loss of liberty. William Langland, who wrote *Piers Plowman*, tells how constantly the women worked. They must spin and card and comb wool, he says, trying to earn enough to pay the rent and the cost of milk and meal to feed their little ones; they must mend and wash and reel, and peel rushes, so that it is a sad story to read the sufferings of the women who live in cottages.

But as the years passed, the times changed. The tenants took little interest in the forced cultivation of their lord's land, and with all the watching it seldom brought in as much income as it might, certainly not so much as the lords desired, for many luxuries were now imported, people were interested in building, and they had developed a taste for living comfortably. These changes had been caused in great degree by the crusades or military expeditions to rescue the Holy Land from the Saracens; but, whatever was the cause, the nobles wanted money.

The villeins, on the other hand, wanted to get rid of forced labor. Buying a release from disagreeable duties was quite in fashion. Even nobles often bought themselves free from entertaining the king. In many cases the peasants were permitted to buy a release from the



OLD MANOR HOUSE

services that they especially disliked. In some instances, where the lord was in pressing need of money, he insisted upon a tenant's buying his freedom. If a lord had a good supply of workmen, a tenant was sometimes allowed to leave the manor on condition of paying a tax. The Church was the friend of the tenant. It taught that to free a serf was a deed pleasing to God; and if the son of the poorest serf showed intellectual ability

and aptitude for the priesthood, it demanded his release. It is thought that William Langland was a villein and became free on entering the Church. A tenant could sometimes escape to some city and find friends who would conceal him; and in England there was a law that if a man could succeed in remaining hidden for a year and a day, he was forever free. Many of these runaways knew some trade by which they could support themselves. There were tanners, carpenters, saddlers, shoemakers, blacksmiths, and tailors among them. Early in the fourteenth century the weaving of fine woolens was introduced into England; and at this trade especially a man could earn a good support.

Little by little, then, the villeins were discovering that the lords needed them quite as much as they needed the lords. If a lord did not treat his laborers well, he would be likely to lose some of them. As time passed, more and more of the tenants paid rent instead of giving service; and the lords could not always get as much service as they needed. More and more men became free to go from one manor to another as hired laborers. Villeinage would probably have slowly disappeared in any case, but in the fourteenth century the system received two great shocks. One was the fact

that when England fought France at the battle of Crécy, the day was won for the English, not by knights in steel armor, but by yeomen with their bows and arrows. The other was the terrible Black Death, a pestilence which swept over Europe. It is thought to have destroyed nearly one third as many people as there are in the United States. Then the lords or their heirs were in difficulties. They received a heriot on the death of a villein and the usual relief from his heir; but so many had died that few manors had men enough left to do the necessary work. The success at Crécy had shown the common folk that they were able to protect themselves; and now that laborers were few, they began to see that they were an important part of the population. In England occurred an uprising known as the Peasants' Revolt. The chief demand of these peasants was to be free from villeinage; and although the revolters were severely punished, villeinage rapidly disappeared. France, too, had learned a lesson from her defeats at Crécy and elsewhere, for she had found that her knights in all their armor could not protect their country. People began to question, "If knights cannot even guard their own land, what is the use of knighthood?" and both knighthood and the manor system

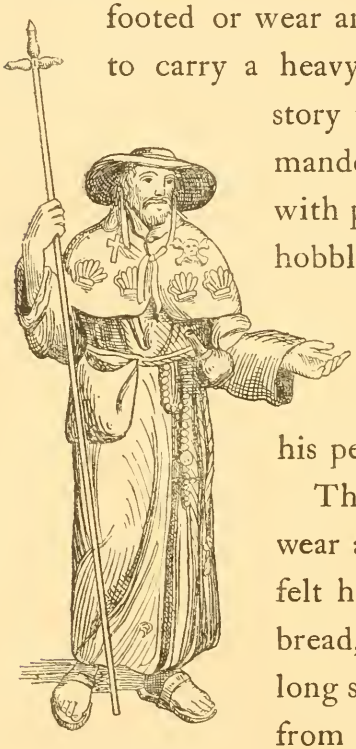
gradually disappeared. But although the system has vanished, it still influences the law; for instance, the belief of the Middle Ages was that the land of a country belonged to the king and was granted by him to his vassals for life; and to-day if a man in England dies intestate and without heirs, his land goes to the King; in America it goes to the state. So it is that people of the twentieth century are affected by the beliefs and customs of the people who lived on manors many hundred years ago.

CHAPTER VII

Pilgrimages and Crusades

Life in the Middle Ages was not all made up of tournaments and battles and sieges of castles. People thought a good deal of how to escape being punished for their sins and how to make sure of going to heaven when they died. The way that seemed to them most certain to accomplish these objects was to make pilgrimages, or visits to holy places. The pilgrimage that was looked upon as most profitable was that to the Holy Land; but this was a long, difficult journey and quite beyond the reach of the masses of people. Fortunately for them, almost every cathedral was believed to be favored by some saint, and there were few persons who could not at some time in their lives make a visit to at least one of these fortunate shrines. When people were ill or were in danger, they often vowed to make a pilgrimage if they were healed of their illness or were rescued from their peril. Many went in the hope that by praying before a certain shrine they would be cured of some disease for which the doctors had not been able to find

a remedy. Some were sent by their confessors as penance for their sins; and in such cases it was believed to be praiseworthy to make the journey as uncomfortable as possible. Sometimes a penitent was ordered to go barefooted or wear an iron ring on his arm, or even to carry a heavy iron chain. There is an old story that two men were once commanded by their confessor to walk with peas in their shoes. One of them hobbled along the way in great discomfort; but the other strode along easily, for he had been thoughtful enough to boil his peas before starting.



A PILGRIM

The ideal pilgrim was supposed to wear a rough gray cloak and a round felt hat, to sling a scrip, or bag, for bread, over his shoulder, to carry a long staff with a water bottle hanging from it, and to set out on foot, begging his bread by the way; but there were as many kinds of pilgrims as of folk, and as time passed, fewer and fewer of them troubled themselves to wear the gray cloak or even to beg their bread if they

could afford to buy it. In Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* the author describes a large company of pilgrims, but not one of them carried even scrip or staff. A knight, who was one of their number, had just returned from a

CANTERBURY PILGRIMS

voyage, and he started just as he was, in a fustian gipon, stained by his coat of mail. His son, a merry young squire, wore a sort of short gown with long, wide sleeves. A doctor was gorgeous in a robe of bright blue and red lined with silk. A woman from the town of Bath wore

a sort of riding mantle fastened about her waist, and a hat "as broad as is a buckler or a shield."

Good folk who were entirely sincere in wishing to make a pilgrimage in order to beg the aid of some kindly saint saw no harm in making their journey agreeable. A company of pilgrims often hired a few singers and bagpipe players to go with them and enliven the way. In the *Canterbury Tales*, the worthy landlord says, "There is neither comfort nor pleasure in riding along as silent as a stone"; and he suggests that each one of the travelers shall tell two stories going to Canterbury, and two returning. Then, when they have come back to the inn, he who has told the best tale shall have a supper at the expense of the others. These people had no peas in their shoes, or if they had, they did not mind, for they ambled along comfortably on horseback; and when night had come, they drew rein at the Tabard Inn, where they were sure of good wine and the best of food.

When pilgrims had come to their journey's end, some went straight to their prayers; others wandered about the church curiously. At Canterbury there was much to see. Among other treasures there was the point of the sword that had been thrust into the brain of the martyr Thomas

à Becket, and there was his very skull, all covered with silver save the forehead. The devout kissed the sacred rust of the sword and pressed their lips reverently to the skull. They gazed upon the hair shirt which the archbishop had worn and the scourge with which he had so often beaten himself for his sins. There were bones of lesser saints, there were silken vestments stiff with elaborate embroidery, and there were superb jewels and gold and silver ornaments for the shrine that had been presented by earnest worshipers. It is said that at the principal altar in the Canterbury cathedral only a few pence were left in the course of a whole year; but that at the shrine of Thomas à Becket gifts were made in the same time amounting to nearly one thousand pounds, a sum that would buy much more then than it will to-day.

One of the greatest treasures of the cathedral at Canterbury was a flask of blood, said to be that of à Becket. It was believed that if a sick person was permitted to taste a cup of water with which a drop of this blood had been mixed, he would be cured of whatever disease he might have. It is no wonder that thousands flocked to Canterbury. Sometimes one hundred thousand were in the place at the same time. An enterprising young

man set to work to make ampullæ, or tiny flasks of lead and pewter, in which pilgrims might carry home a few drops of the wonder-working water to heal any of their friends who were suffering. These ampullæ had little ears pierced with holes for cords. They were sometimes hung about the neck and sometimes sewn on the cap or cloak or on the tunic over the heart. Other souvenirs could be purchased. One was a silver or pewter head of Saint Thomas. Little bells were also for sale, called Canterbury bells, a name that has been given to a blue bell-flower of Canterbury which grows commonly in our gardens.

AMPULLA

Every shrine had its special token. Pilgrims who had been to Rome might wear badges representing two keys crossed, or a veronica, that is, a representation of the face of Christ on a handkerchief; those who had visited Santiago da Campostella in Spain wore scallop shells in honor of a miracle said to have been wrought on the

seashore by the body of Saint James. Sir Walter Raleigh wrote: —

Give me my scallop shell of quiet,
My staff of faith to walk upon,
My scrip of joy, immortal diet,
My bottle of salvation,
My gown of glory, hope's true gage;
And thus I 'll take my pilgrimage.

The scallop shells and other badges were highly valued by their owners as proofs that they had really made the various pilgrimages. Of course a large amount of money was gained by their sale, and the right to manufacture them was very valuable. This privilege was given to certain families or to a bishop or to some convent.

The people who went on pilgrimage were as unlike as people of to-day, and while many went with most honest devotion and often with loss and trouble to themselves, others went because they enjoyed new scenes and the adventures of the way. Chaucer laughs slyly at these last and says that when April has come, when the gentle breezes blow, when twigs are green and little birds sing through the night, then it is that folk long to go on pilgrimage. They could hardly be blamed, for such a pilgrimage as that to Canterbury was certainly a pleasant little excursion. The road from London was known as

the "Pilgrim's Road." At Walsingham there was a monastery whose chapel contained a famous statue of the Virgin Mary, and the road thither was called the "Palmer's Way," and the "Walsingham Green Way." A common name in England for the Milky Way was the "Walsingham Way."

On the Continent there was a shrine in almost every province. The favorite one in France was on the wild, jagged rock of Mont Saint Michel in Normandy. This was sacred to the archangel Michael. At Kiev in Russia rested the bones of many martyrs, and every year thousands came to gaze reverently upon them and offer up fervent prayers. Trèves in Prussia rejoiced in the possession of a garment said to be the seamless coat worn by the Saviour. Throngs of people made long journeys to visit these places, and it was a common saying that the city which contained a valuable relic consisted mainly of churches and inns.

There were sham pilgrims as well as real ones. It was regarded as a worthy act to aid a pilgrim by giving him food and lodging, and some of the gilds, or associations of tradesmen, maintained lodging-houses on purpose for poor pilgrims. This was an accommodation, but not entirely a charity; for the tradesmen expected to be well

paid in the benefit that they would receive from the prayers of their guests. People of a wandering turn of mind or those who were too lazy to work for their bread found the liberality shown to pilgrims a vast convenience. They had only to choose a way leading to some popular shrine, and then they could roam on, comfortably certain of bed and board without money or labor. It was easy for one who was weary of his work or his home village to become a sort of perpetual pilgrim; that is, it was easy until so many had learned the trick that laws were made against this vagrancy, and unless a person could prove that he was a real pilgrim, he was in danger of being shut up in prison as a real vagabond.

Of course the most advantageous pilgrimage of all was that to the Holy Land. This was counted so meritorious a deed that he who aided any one in accomplishing it was looked upon as especially sure of a blessing; while he who hindered such a pilgrim might expect neither happiness nor prosperity. Many of the gilds had the law that when one of its members was setting out on pilgrimage, the others, both men and women, must go a little way with him, and in saying good-bye each must present him with a piece of money. He paid no dues to the gild while he was away; for the members were supposed to

share in the merits of his journey. On all the principal roads leading to holy places there were rest stations, sometimes built and supported by freewill offerings and sometimes by regular taxes. Here the pilgrim was always entitled to a night's shelter. Convents were frequent, and at any one of them he was welcome to fire, water, and lodging, and even food if this was needed. In many places he had no tolls to pay, and whoever did him an injury was excommunicated, or forbidden the benefits of the Church.

Before a person started on a long pilgrimage, he confessed his sins and went to a special service. Psalms were sung and prayers were offered that he might return in safety. Then, just as the sword of the young knight was blessed, so the priest now pronounced the blessing of the Church upon the pilgrim's staff and scrip. Mass was said, a cross of cloth was sewn on his shoulder, and he started on a journey that would separate him from his friends for months and perhaps years. It might be that he had no idea of returning, for he who spent his last years in Jerusalem and there met his death was regarded as being the most blessed of mankind.

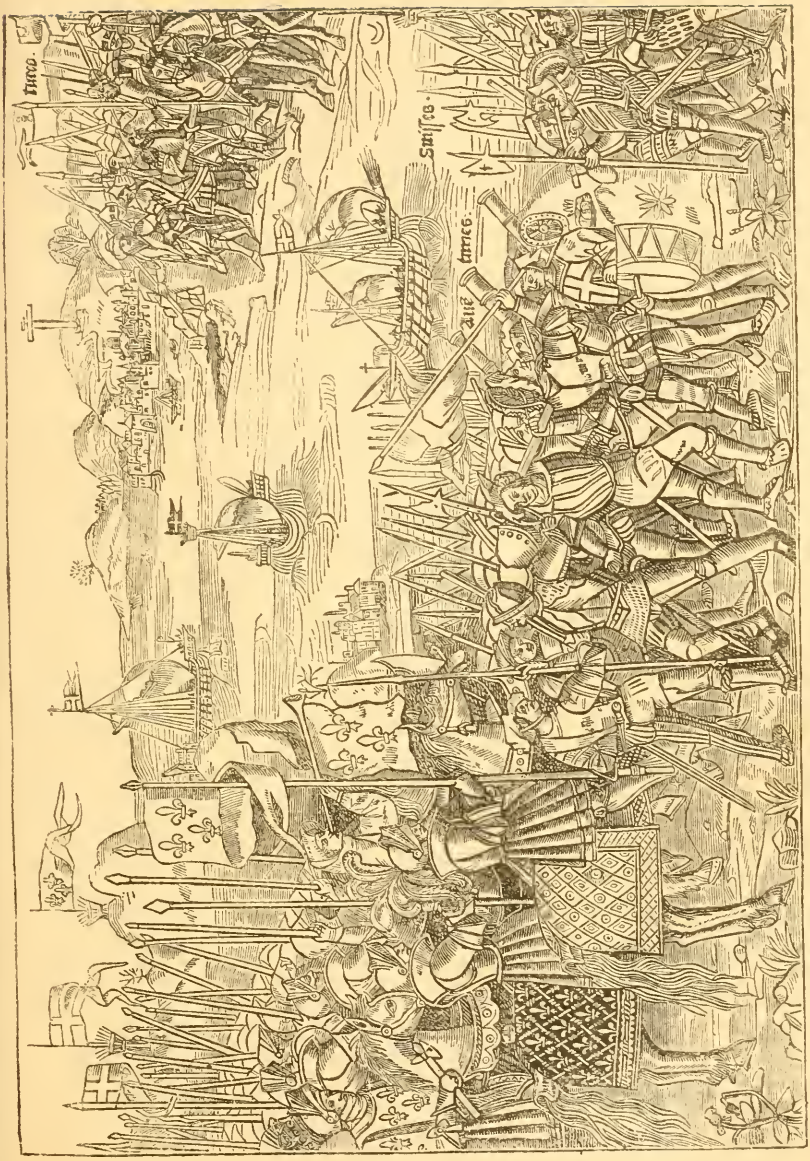
The common route from England to Palestine lay

through France to Lombardy and Venice, thence to Cyprus, Jaffa, and Jerusalem. Sometimes it led to Egypt. So many thousand pilgrims were constantly traversing these roads that a person who started alone soon found companionship and the safety that a large company would afford. Prominent men usually carried letters from their king, declaring that they were pilgrims and commending them to the protection of the rulers through whose lands they would pass. Sometimes a band of pilgrims was almost large enough for an army. In the eleventh century a great company, seven thousand strong, set out from Germany and Normandy for the Holy Land. Many of them were priests or bishops; but their holy orders did not save them, for Arab robbers came down upon them and carried away a large amount of their money, and forced them to fight for their lives. When those who escaped reached Jerusalem, the patriarch, or head of the Church in that city, came out with the Christians of the place to bid them welcome. They were escorted with clanging of cymbals and flashing of lights to the Holy Sepulchre, in which Jesus was said to have lain. These dwellers in Jerusalem pointed out the various places of interest, and were as definite in their information as if they had known anything about the matter. The pilgrims were eager to bathe in

the river Jordan, and, indeed, to go wherever the feet of the Lord had trodden; but the Arabs were all about Jerusalem, and he who wandered far from the city was in danger of losing his money and perhaps his life. After going about as much as they dared, they set out for their homes, stopping at Rome on their way.

Many pilgrims preserved with the utmost care the shirts which they wore at their entrance into Jerusalem to be used as their shrouds; for thus they would make sure of an easy entrance into heaven. They did not forget to carry home some of the dust of the sacred country; for it was believed that whoever possessed a grain of it could never be harmed by fiends or demons. It was the custom for every pilgrim to bring back also a palm; and when he had come to his own village, this was put up over the altar of his church to show that he had made the great pilgrimage. It was from this custom that pilgrims to Jerusalem were called palmers; but as time passed, the name was often given to any pilgrim, even though he was making only a few days' journey to some shrine near his home.

Pilgrims sometimes came back with heavier purses than they had carried with them; for some of them were also merchants, and the productions of Asia were brought



CRUSADERS SETTING SAIL FOR JERUSALEM

by caravans to the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. There these merchants would buy them, and on their homeward journey they would dispose of them at a most excellent profit. Another advantage of pilgrimage was that the returning traveler had enough stories of strange sights and adventures to last him all the rest of his life. In those days when neither magazines, novels, nor daily papers had ever been dreamed of, even the prosiest of these story tellers must have been a welcome guest at any castle on his way.

The pilgrim often had, however, many stories of cruelty and persecution to narrate. In the seventh century the followers of Mohammed who captured Jerusalem had agreed that Christians might be permitted to live in the city provided they paid a tax of two gold pieces every year, wore a dress different from that of the Mohammedans, and did not put the cross on the outside of their buildings. Moreover, they must always rise if a Mohammedan appeared among them. During the following four hundred years, there were no great changes in the laws, but there were great differences in the characters of the Mohammedan rulers. Some were cruel, while others were kind; and the condition of the Christians in Jerusalem was "as uncertain as April weather," said one of

the old writers. The best of these rulers was the famous Haroun al Raschid, the "caliph" of the "Arabian Nights." At length, however, the Holy City fell into the hands of the barbarous Seljukian Turks. They, too, were Mohammedans, and they hated the Christians; and now, when pilgrims returned to France and Germany and England, they had terrible tales to tell of how the Christians were treated. "The Christian churches are profaned," they said, "and the priests are thrown into wretched dungeons. If a pilgrim shows any signs of having money, he is seized and robbed. If he is apparently a poor man, he fares even worse, for the Turks declare that no one would set out on such a journey without money, and they either kill him outright or torture him to make him give it up."

Among the pilgrims was a monk called Peter the Hermit. He grew more and more indignant as he thought of the sufferings of the Christians, and of the insults offered by the Turks to the holy places. He prayed and fasted and finally became convinced that God had given to him the special work of recovering the Holy Land for the Christians. He told what he had seen to the Pope, Urban II. The Pope wept in sympathy and declared that the time had come for all Christians to unite

and drive the Turks from Europe. Peter set out to arouse the people of France. He wore a coarse woolen shirt and a gray mantle. He was bareheaded and barefooted. He rode upon a mule and bore a huge cross in his arms. He was so earnest and eloquent that no one could hear him without being moved. People treasured up the very hairs of his mule as precious legacies for their children. They loaded him down with gifts, but he divided these among the poor. He seemed to have no thought for himself, but only for the freedom of the Holy City. "Repent! Repent!" he cried. "Remember that, however wicked you may have been, you have now the chance to win pardon for all your sins. He who strikes a blow to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the pollution of the unbelievers has thrown open the door of heaven for himself."

Into the midst of these people, already aroused to a high pitch of excitement and enthusiasm, came Pope Urban. He called a great council to meet at Clermont in France. No church was large enough to hold the thousands that came together, and they all went out upon a wide-spreading plain. A high scaffold was built, and from this the Pope addressed them. He bade them cease making war with one another and devote all their

power to striving against the Mohammedans. "You are sure of victory," he said, "for the Turks are cowards, while you are valiant and strong. If you are slain, you will indeed have lost your bodies, but you will have saved

PETER THE HERMIT HANDING LETTER FROM SIMEON, PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM, TO POPE URBAN II

your souls. Do not refuse for love of your families; for you must love God more than these. Do not refuse for love of home; for all the world is the Christian's country. Do not refuse because of your wealth; for much richer treasures await you. Those who die will enter the mansions of heaven. Those who live will behold the

sepulchre of our Lord. Fortunate indeed are they who may enter such a conflict and share the glorious rewards that are set before them." "God wills it! God wills it!" shouted the people. They wept, they smote their breasts in sorrow for their sins, and on the instant many pressed forward to beg for the red cross that was to be the sign of their having entered upon the holy undertaking. The Latin word for cross is *crux*, and therefore the expeditions to drive the Turks from the Holy Land were called crusades.

The Pope had forbidden any to go except strong men well able to fight, and he had set August 15, 1096, as the day of their departure; but the eager people could not think of waiting so long, and four months before that date two bands set out for Palestine, made up not only of strong men, but of old and infirm men and even women and children. One band was led by a gentleman of Burgundy called Walter the Penniless, one by Peter himself. It is thought that there were several hundred thousand persons on the march. They had come from throughout Europe. If a servant declared that he wished to join the crusade, no master dared to hold him back. "God wills it!" said the debtor, and his creditor did not attempt to prevent him from going or even to make him

pay his debt. "God wills it!" the criminal in prison cried, and the doors of his dungeon were thrown open that he, too, might join the army. The lord of a manor did not venture to forbid even a villein to put on the cross, nor did the bishop venture to command a priest or monk to remain at home. Sometimes whole families set out together, sometimes husbands left their wives, or mothers their children, to join in the wild rush to the land of the unbelievers. Vast numbers of these eager people went because they firmly believed they were following the will of God; but thieves went to gain chances to rob and steal, and swarms of folk went because they were greedy for any kind of change and excitement. As for the knights, their business was fighting; and here was an opportunity to fight, not for the prizes of the tournament, but for heaven itself.

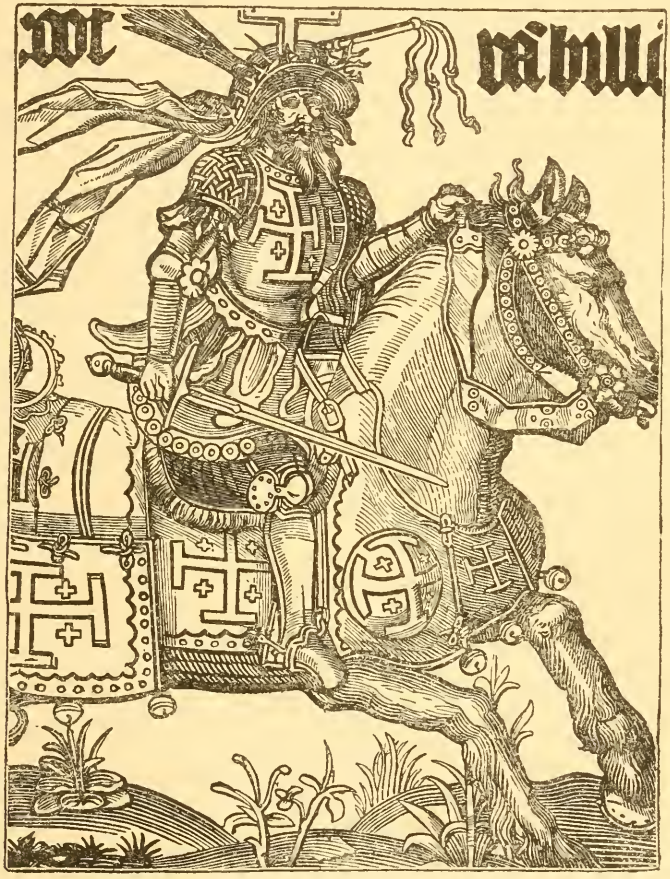
This strange and unwieldy army made their way to the East, and they succeeded in capturing Jerusalem. Some one must be chosen to rule the city, and the crusaders favored the foremost of the leaders, Godfrey of Bouillon, duke of Lorraine. It is said that some of them asked Godfrey's servants what was their master's greatest fault. The answer was that he persisted in staying so long in church to learn the meaning of every image and picture

that the dinner was often spoiled. In spite of this grievous imperfection, he was chosen ruler of Jerusalem. He would not accept the title of king and wear a crown of gold in the very place where Jesus had worn a crown of thorns; and therefore the title of "Baron and defender of the Holy Sepulchre" was given to him.

This was the first of the crusades. There were eight others, for after about one hundred years, Jerusalem again fell into the hands of the Mohammedans. Then Europe was indeed aroused, and three sovereigns, Richard the Lionhearted of England, Philip II of France, and Frederick Barbarossa of Germany, led enormous armies toward the East. Frederick was drowned on the way; but the others pushed on to Palestine. Battles were lost and battles were won. The kings quarreled and Philip and his soldiers went home. Richard had not men enough to capture Jerusalem, and he, too, left the country, though not until he had shown such skill and valor in warfare that even to this day his prowess is not forgotten in the East.

People had felt so sure that the crusade of the three sovereigns would succeed that they hardly knew how to account for its failure. "It must be that the crusaders had committed many sins of which they had not re-

pented," thought some; and gradually the belief spread that only those who were free from sin and pure in



GODFREY OF BOUILLON

heart could ever win the home-land of the Saviour. A French shepherd boy named Stephen went from place

to place in France declaring that Jesus had commanded him to lead a company of children to the Holy Land to rescue the sepulchre of Jesus from the unbelievers. Throughout France he sang:—

Jesus, Lord, repair our loss;
Restore to us the holy cross.

Thousands of children joined him. Rich and poor broke away from their homes and marched after him crying, "God wills it! God wills it!" "No bolts, no bars, no fear of fathers or love of mothers could hold them back"; and, moreover, the fathers and mothers often hardly dared to hold them back, lest in so doing they should be opposing God. In Germany, another boy preacher named Nicholas aroused the German children in the same way; and they all set out for the Holy Land. Longfellow says of their departure from Cologne:—

From the gates, that summer day,
Clad in robes of hodden gray,
With the red cross on the breast,
Azure-eyed and golden-haired,
Forth the young crusaders fared;
While above the band devoted
Consecrated banners floated,
Fluttered many a flag and streamer,
And the cross o'er all the rest!

Singing lowly, meekly, slowly,
"Give us, give us back the holy
Sepulchre of the Redeemer!"

THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

They had neither weapons nor any thought of using them. They expected the waters of the sea to divide that they might pass over dryshod; and they supposed that the walls of Jerusalem would fall at their coming and that the unbelievers would yield to them without striking a blow. But the plains were hot and the

mountains were cold. Sometimes they could not get food. Longfellow says: —

> Ah! what master hand shall paint
> How they journeyed on their way,
> How the days grew long and dreary,
> How their little feet grew weary,
> How their little hearts grew faint!

Many were stolen and sold as slaves. Many were lost in that strange and bewildering journey. Thousands sickened and died. A very few, after long months of suffering, found their way back to their homes.

There were in all nine crusades between the latter part of the eleventh century and that of the thirteenth. The bloodshed and suffering came to nothing so far as getting possession of the Holy Land was concerned; for at the end of the last expedition it was left in the hands of the Mohammedans, and there it has remained from that day to this. The crusades did not drive the unbelievers from Palestine, but they did make vast changes in Europe. In the first place, an enormous amount of money was needed to pay expenses. If the lord of a manor wished to go on a crusade, he would often allow some of his villeins to pay dues in money instead of in work; and this tended to break up the manor system.

A sovereign who needed money for a crusade was usually willing to grant to some of his cities many privileges of self-government if they would pay him a good round sum for this freedom. Again, the most turbulent folk and the most eager fighters were sure to seize the opportunity to join these expeditions, and thus make sure of plenty of fighting and excitement; and this left the home-lands more quiet and peaceful. Another great gain was that these expeditions strengthened the Latin power in Constantinople, and thus prevented the Mohammedans from sweeping over central Europe. Moreover, the crusaders became accustomed to the use of many things from the East, such as spices and silks, which they had regarded as luxuries when at home or had perhaps seldom seen at all. Numbers of vessels were built to carry the thousands of men to Palestine, and on the return voyage their holds were filled with these eastern productions. So it was that both shipbuilding and commerce were greatly increased. People learned not only to use new things, but to think new thoughts. They learned of lands previously unknown to them, of strange peoples and customs. They were eager listeners to stories of the crusades, and soon these stories, together with poems and histories, were written in the languages of

the different countries of Europe. All these new ideas were most interesting to the good folk of the time; but there was one in particular that was not only interesting but exceedingly surprising to them. The knight was the ideal man of the age, and Richard the Lionhearted was the ideal knight. The Mohammedan was despised by every one. But, behold, it had been seen that Richard's Mohammedan enemy Saladin was as brave and fearless, as courteous and generous as any hero of chivalry could ever be. The crusaders and those who listened to their stories did not become devoted admirers of their Mohammedan foes, but many of them did begin to comprehend that even if a man was of different race, different customs, and different faith, he was "a man for a' that"; and this was perhaps the greatest gain of all.

CHAPTER VIII

Military Orders, Monks, and Monasteries

Among those who wished most earnestly to make the way of the pilgrims a little easier were some merchants of Amalfi in Italy. A number of years before the first crusade, they came together to discuss how they could be most helpful to the wayfarers. They concluded that those who were strong and well and rich were in no special need of their aid. "It is the sick and the poor whom we will care for," they declared, and they decided to build a hospital in Jerusalem. The caliph of Egypt gave them permission, and they built two hospitals, one for men and one for women. Here the sick were cared for and the poor were given shelter and food.

When these grateful pilgrims left Jerusalem and returned to their homes, they told people about the new hospitals. Those who were able sent gifts; and this work of the merchants was plainly so sensible and helpful an undertaking that contributions from all parts of Europe, especially from Italy, were showered upon it, and valuable gifts of land in different countries were made to it.

Many pilgrims, after reaching Jerusalem and seeing what good the hospitals were doing, resolved to remain and help in the good work. Then came the first crusade. The hospitals cared for the wounded soldiers; and some of the crusaders decided that they, too, would remain and care for pilgrims. It became necessary to have a regular organization. This was formed, and the name Hospitallers of the Order of St. John was chosen. Whoever wished to join the order must take the three vows that were required of monks and nuns, poverty, chastity, and obedience, and must also promise to devote his life to the service of the poor and sick in Jerusalem. Then the patriarch of Jerusalem put upon him a plain black robe having a white cross on the left breast. So much money and land came into the hands of the Hospitallers that they founded one house after another, not only in the Holy Land, but scattered through the countries of western Europe. There was also a chapter of the order to which women might belong, and large numbers joined it.

Many of the members of the order had made long and dangerous journeys. They had fought in savage battles, had commanded scores, perhaps hundreds of followers; and it must have seemed strange enough to them to have rules given them for every action and to be punished

like little children if they were not obedient. In the English houses, if two knights quarreled, the penalty was to eat dinner for seven days sitting on the ground. Two days of the seven, they were given only bread and water. If one struck another, he must do penance for forty days, usually by fasting.

HOSPITALLER

In 1118, a superior was chosen who was deeply interested in military matters. He proposed that the knights should not only care for those in need, but should also take vows to fight whenever necessary in defense of religion. This was going back to their old occupation, and the Hospitallers were delighted. They met the Turks in battle again and again, and were, indeed, the fiercest defenders of the kingdom of Jerusalem. When one of these knights went into warfare, he wore armor of course, and over it a red surcoat with a white cross on the breast, and a red mantle with a white cross on the shoulder.

After the Turks captured Jerusalem, the Hospitallers established themselves on the island of Cyprus, then on Rhodes, and there they put up some large, handsome buildings. They cared for the sick, they fought the Turks, and they carried pilgrims from Cyprus to the Holy Land. The Turks sent out vessels to prevent this, and there were some furious sea-fights.

Next, the Hospitallers became military engineers, for they got possession of the island of Malta and made it one of the strongest fortifications in the world. Twice the Turks tried their best to capture it, but did not succeed. Later, the Hospitallers patrolled the Mediterranean Sea with large war-galleys, trying to overcome the pirates of northern Africa. The order is still in existence. It has been called "the last relic of the crusades and of chivalry."

The Hospitallers did their best to carry pilgrims safely to the coast of Palestine and to care for them after they were once in Jerusalem; but there was a long and dangerous journey to be made from the coast to the Holy City. The Turks were always on the watch, and when they caught sight of a company of pilgrims, they swooped down upon them and either put them to death or dragged them away to a life of slavery. A band of nine valiant

knights in Jerusalem were determined that this should no longer be endured; and they took not only the usual three vows, but also a fourth, which bound them to protect pilgrims on this journey and to fight for the Holy Sepulchre. They built a house for themselves close to the temple in Jerusalem, and from this came their name of Templars, or Knights of the Temple. Their numbers increased. Sons of the noblest and richest families in Europe begged to become members of the order. Princely gifts of money and lands were lavished upon it; branches were formed, and houses, many of them as well fortified as castles, were built in the Holy Land and also in nearly all the countries of Europe. The dress of the Templars was a white surcoat with a red cross over the breast, and a long white mantle with a red cross on the shoulder.

TEMPLAR

Two hundred years passed, and the Templars had

become an entirely different association. In the early days of the order they had lived upon charity and had chosen for their seal a representation of two knights riding upon one horse to indicate poverty ; but now they had become enormously wealthy. Their numbers had increased greatly because they admitted as partial members many persons who simply wished to make sure of protection. More than one king became jealous of their power, and was exasperated because the Church forbade him to tax them. Stories were spread by their enemies that instead of fighting with the Turks they were ready to make any sort of treaty that would secure their own property in the Holy Land. At length Philip the Fair of France accused them falsely of heresy and immorality. Some of them were tortured until they admitted that the charges were true, and in France fifty-four were burned at the stake. Other countries followed the example of France. Part of their property was given to the Hospitallers, but by far the larger part of it went to the rulers of the lands in which it was situated.

The Hospitallers and the Templars were the principal military orders of the Middle Ages; but there were also many orders which were purely religious. Most of the convents already in existence followed the rule of Saint

Benedict of Nursia, who died in the sixth century. The monks who gathered around him were bidden to be so poor as not even to claim as their own the gowns that they wore; to pray seven times daily, and to chant the Psalms of David every week; and also to labor with their hands. "Laborare est orare," was one of Saint Benedict's favorite mottoes. The monks were required to spend seven hours a day in manual labor and two hours in reading and study. While they ate, they must listen to the reading of some religious book. They wore white cassocks, and over them flowing gowns with hoods. The long gown would be in the way in working; so, when they made ready for work or for traveling, they wore instead a short black tunic without sleeves. They were rarely permitted to speak. They fasted often, and during Lent they ate nothing until after vespers. They had to promise to bear reproof and even corporal punishment with the utmost meekness.

BENEDICTINE MONK

These were some of the provisions of the rule of

Saint Benedict; but as one century after another passed, the customs of both monks and nuns became far less strict. As an act of piety, children were often led in by their parents or even taken in their cradles and laid upon the altar to grow up in the convents that they might become monks or nuns. These children were not always adapted to the monastic life, and when they grew up, they were not sorry to have the rules less severe. Then, too, the monasteries had become very rich. It is true that no individual monk or nun could hold property; but the convent as a whole could hold an unlimited amount. Kings and nobles had made them large gifts. A Benedictine convent was no longer the home of a group of self-denying monks living in obscurity and poverty; it was the abode of a community so rich that it was a power in the country in which it was situated. The rule grew more and more lax. Abuses sometimes crept in, and wrongdoing. Some earnest folk did not feel that this comfortable fashion of living was at all what life in a convent should be; they were eager to go back to the simple, severe rule of Saint Benedict. That was why the convent of Cluny was founded. The Cluniacs did some manual work, but spent most of their time in prayer and study. They taught, and in their

bookrooms they made beautiful copies of the ancient manuscripts. They cared for the poor, and they did everything they could to increase the power of the Pope. The house at Cluny was only the beginning; for soon it became too small for the earnest men who wished to join the community; and one house after another was founded to make a place for them. Cluny, however, kept the control in its own hands. The other houses were governed by priors, but the head of the house at Cluny was called an abbot. He often visited the other convents and examined them to make sure that they were carrying out the Cluniac rules and were not introducing any new customs. These houses were known as the Congregation of Cluny. They increased so rapidly that in two hundred years after the parent house was founded in 910, there were fully two thousand of them. They were scattered over many countries; but, no matter where they stood, every one was under the rule of the abbot of Cluny.

In spite of the two thousand Cluniac convents, there were still many people who were not satisfied. They felt that even the rule of Cluny was not strict enough. Those who are in earnest in wishing to lead lives of devotion, they said, ought to be entirely free from all

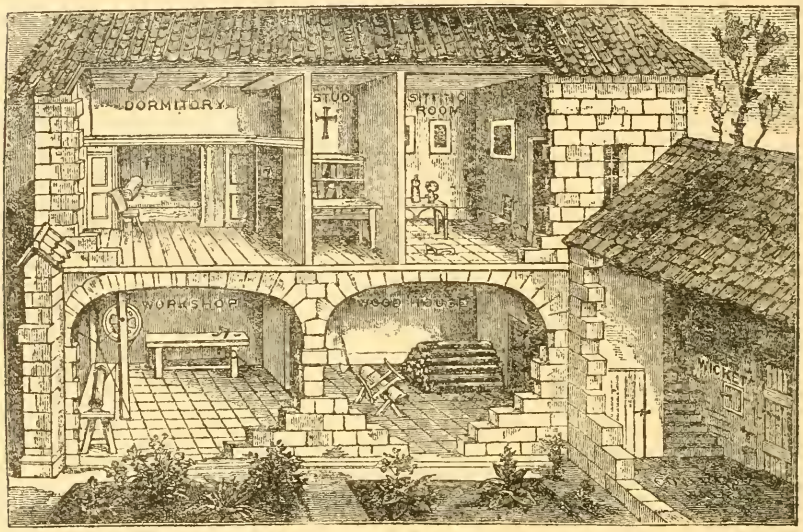
worldly matters and give themselves up wholly to poverty and self-denial. This belief was most strongly held in France, and during the last quarter of the eleventh century several other orders were founded to carry out the idea. The first of these was the order of Grammont, which was founded by a French nobleman named Stephen. He certainly practiced self-denial, for he lived upon nothing but bread and water. Others followed his teachings, and in time the order was formed. Its rule was far more severe than that of Cluny. Stephen took special pains to free his monks, or "good men," as he preferred they should be called, from the temptations of wealth; for he decreed that, no matter how rich their convent might become, they should have nothing to do with the management of the property. This was all to be in the hands of some lay brethren. Unfortunately, the lay brethren and the "good men" did not agree, and at length the order fell to pieces.

The Carthusian Order was founded a few years after the Order of Grammont by one Bruno, a canon of Cologne. This was the most strict of all the orders. Bruno chose for his abode a wild tract of land in southeastern France. There he and six others built a chapel and a group of rude huts. These finally became the

Grande Chartreuse. He and his six companions entered upon a life of the utmost rigor. The men could hardly be called companions, for each had his own little cell, or rather, a tiny house, and in this he spent his life, praying, meditating, and copying manuscripts. He was seldom permitted to speak, and indeed, he seldom had an opportunity. Once a day food was silently passed in at his window. Three times a week he took only bread and water. Twice a week vegetables were given him, which he might cook for himself. On Sundays and Thursdays he was allowed to eat cheese or eggs, and even fish if any had been given to the convent. Meat he was never permitted to taste. On Sundays and feast days he had the rare indulgence of dining with the other monks, but in silence of course. He wore constantly a shirt of the roughest haircloth and over it a white cassock. Over the cassock he wore a scapulary, that is, a long piece of cloth, hanging down in front and behind and joined at the sides by a band. His hood was white.

CARTHUSIAN MONK

Many Carthusian houses were established, especially in France. Each of these was known as a Chartreuse in honor of the first home of the order. In England, "Chartreuse" became "Charter-house."



CELL OF A MONK

The Carthusian Order still exists hardly changed at all in its rule. At the Grande Chartreuse of to-day, thirty-six monks have each a tiny apartment of four rooms. It opens into the cloister, and a garden separates it from its next neighbor. Beside the cloister door is a sliding shutter through which food is silently passed in. Whenever the monk is in need of anything, he writes the name of the article on a bit of paper and lays this beside the slide.

It is brought him in silence. No one enters the little abode except its owner. As it was eight hundred years ago, so now he may go to the refectory on Sundays and feast days and eat a silent meal with the other monks. Once a week there is a "public walk," that is, the monks walk together and are permitted to talk. On other days the walk of the monk is a solitary pacing to and fro on a covered way adjoining his cell. The costume is still a white robe and cowl of wool, a white leather belt, and a white woolen cloak. The main business of the order is prayer; but the monks have a valuable library and they do much reading and studying. They maintain houses for the ill and needy.

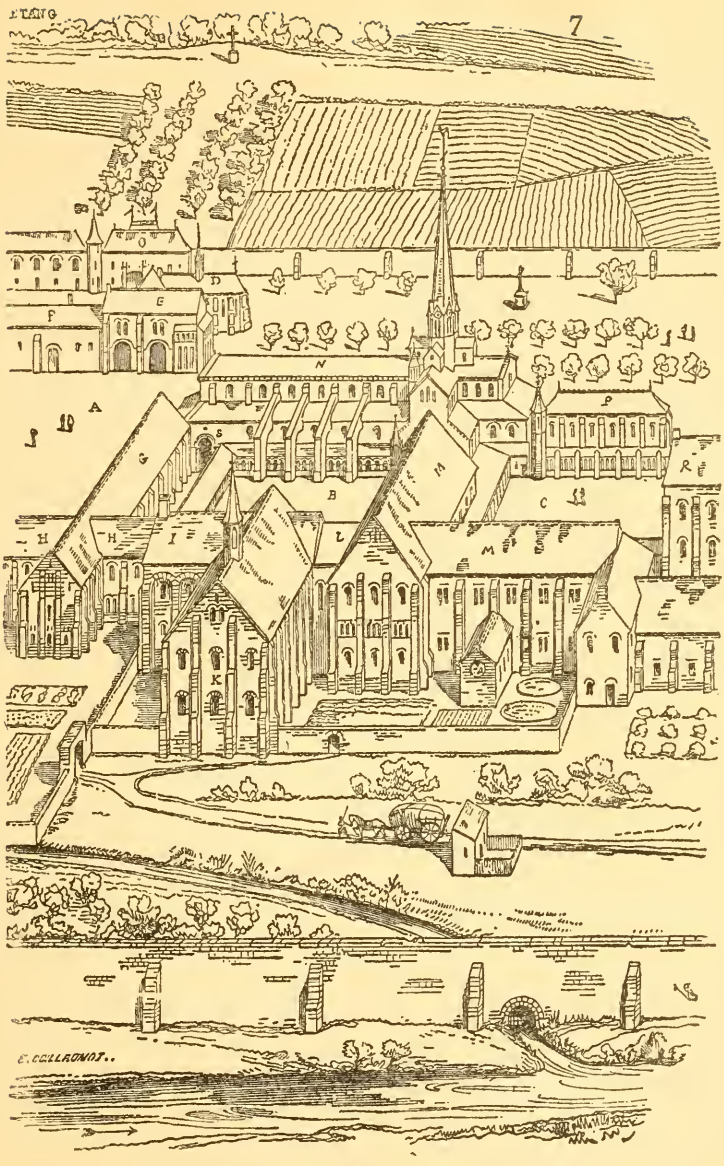
It was not many years after the founding of the Carthusian Order that the whole Christian world was aroused by hearing of the sufferings of the pilgrims to Jerusalem. Peter the Hermit and others preached, Pope Urban called the famous council at Clermont, and in 1095 the first crusade set out. But many remained at home who were just as earnest as the crusaders in longing to do something for the salvation of their souls. Some of them determined to become monks. They wished to live as simply and strictly as possible; but there was no order that seemed to them severe enough. Cluny was now nearly

two hundred years old. The order was wealthy. It owned handsome buildings, broad-spreading lands, and much treasure. Its churches were loaded with ornament. The windows were of the richest stained glass. The chalices gleamed and glittered with jewels. Such surroundings seemed to the people who were seeking so eagerly for simple lives to be entirely too luxurious for their purpose. Of course the next step was the founding of a new order.

CISTERCIAN MONK

The first monastery was built at Citeaux, and therefore the monks were called Cistercians.

The Cistercians planned to build their convents as far from cities as possible. The houses were to be absolutely plain. A single turret for a bell was allowed, but no other towers. Within, the walls were to be bare. No images of saints were admitted, and even the crucifix must be of wood. The candlesticks of the altar were of iron, the vestments of the priests were of coarse fustian. There were no hours of study for the Cistercians. They learned



VIEW OF CITEAUX

how to say their prayers, and that was enough. Instead of studying or reading, they spent much time in manual labor. Their food was rude and scanty, and during the greater part of the year they ate only one meal a day. Their gowns and hoods were made of undyed wool, and therefore they were often called the "white monks." Their sleeves hung down far below their hands, and a company of these monks, sitting with crossed arms, an attitude supposed to express great respect, must have been an amusing sight. The Cistercians were successful farmers. In England they raised immense flocks of sheep, and in the thirteenth century they were the greatest wool merchants in the land. They had also large iron works; and their wealth increased until they became as rich and powerful as the Cluniacs.

The great man of the Cistercians was Saint Bernard. He was so zealous that he found the rigorous ways of the order none too severe for him. He was so eloquent that no one could resist him. He urged the emperor of Germany to go on a crusade; and much to the emperor's own surprise, he found himself promising to go. Saint Bernard preached to a group of students that it was better to save their souls than to study; and straightway a score of them dropped their books and became his followers.

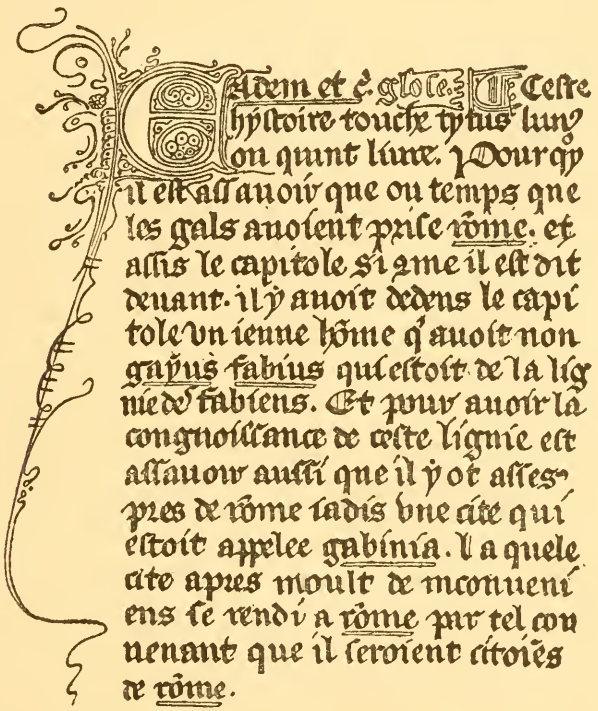
These four orders were the most important of those founded in the tenth and eleventh centuries; but convents were nothing new, and there were orders of all varieties for both monks and nuns. Some were but little less strict than the four that have been named; in others, the monks had a fine time, playing chess, keeping birds and dogs, and even going hunting. Chaucer describes a monk who was very fond of hunting. "And when he rode," says the poet slyly, "one could hear his bridle jingling in the whistling wind as clear and as loud as the chapel bell." According to Chaucer, this same monk liked a fat swan "best of any roast"; and certainly some of the monks did not stint themselves in eating and drinking. It is said that the monks of Winchester once complained to Henry II "with tears in their eyes" that the bishop had insisted upon withdrawing several of their dishes, and had left them only ten. The story declares that King Henry swore at them roundly and said that three dishes were enough for him.

In rearing the buildings of a convent, there was little variety in the general plan. The centre of the whole establishment was an oblong space of green turf with sometimes a fountain and shrubs. This was called the cloister court. Around it was generally a covered walk

whose roof was supported by beautifully wrought pillars of stone. Here the monks walked and studied and taught their pupils. The church was built at the north end of the court, a wise plan for keeping off the cold north winds. On the east side of the cloister was the chapter-house, or council chamber. Next to that was the dormitory, or general sleeping house. On the south side was the refectory, or dining room. Here there was always a pulpit, or reading desk, from which some religious book was read while the monks ate their meals. On the west side was the office of the cellarer, whose business it was to look after food and drink. Near it was a guest house, sometimes richly furnished and decorated, and any other buildings that might be needed. No monastery possessed what would to-day be called a library. Printing was not invented. Books were written by hand on expensive vellum or parchment; and a collection of four or five hundred would have been looked upon with some wonder. There was almost always a writing room,

A MONK WRITING

however, usually over the chapter-house. Here the monks copied laboriously with pen and ink the books used in the church service and those that were sold to outsiders. The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THE BEGINNING OF A CHAPTER

capitals at the beginnings of chapters were often elaborately painted with gold and bright colors that are just as brilliant now as when they were put on. Many convents carried on schools, and the schoolbooks also had to be made. The

journal must be kept up, that is, the account of what was done in the convent from day to day, and sometimes annals of what was happening in the kingdom.

A monastery did not run itself. It was not only a place where prayers were said and books were copied; it was a place where people ate and drank and wore out shoes and clothes, cared for the sick, managed a school, and entertained as if it were a great hotel. There was a vast amount of work to be done, and a vast amount of thinking was needed to manage the work and see that nothing was left at loose ends. Wool and linen for clothing were raised on convent lands, spun and woven, cut out and made on the spot. Cattle were raised and the skins tanned for shoes. Vegetables and fruit grew in the convent gardens; grain was grown in the fields of the establishment and was ground in the convent mill. Grapes were grown for wine, and bees were kept for honey. There were carpenters, masons, fishers, hunters, blacksmiths, and bakers. Guests were always coming and going. There were pilgrims, both humble and of rank, minstrels, merchants, jugglers, pedlars, nobles, sometimes even a king and his suite; and all were to be looked after and treated according to their degree. This was the hospitality that was shown to Columbus and his little son at the Spanish con-

vent of La Rabida, and that opened the way for his voyage to the New World.

All these different departments of a convent must be cared for, and there must be some one person responsible for each. At the head of the whole establishment was the abbot; in his absence his place was filled by the prior. The care of money, clothing, and keeping the accounts was in the hands of the chamberlain, and he had also the responsibility of the archives, or records of the convent. The librarian had charge of whatever books there were and also of the copying room. The gold and silver chalices and other vessels used in the service and the ornaments of the altar were often encrusted with costly jewels. Then, too, there were relics of the saints, and if these could cure the lame, heal the sick, and open the eyes of the blind, they were surely of much greater value than all the gold and gems, to say nothing of the amount of gifts made to the convent by the grateful people who had been healed. These were cared for and guarded by the sacristan. It was no small task to look after the food and drink for hundreds of people, for the well and the ill, for monks, for young novices, who were trying the life before taking their final vows, for servants, for pupils of the school, for the little children who had been given

to the convent. This was the work of the cellarer. But it was only a part of his work, for he must always be ready for guests of all kinds and degrees. Perhaps these guests were only a little band of the humblest pilgrims who would be more than satisfied with the simplest fare; and perhaps they were a noble with his followers, or even a prince or a king. Whoever came, whether one or a large company, the cellarer must always be ready to treat each one according to his rank. No bill was presented. The hospitality was a free gift to all; but it was expected that those who were able to pay would make a gift to their entertainers. Sometimes these guests or other friends of the convent presented large sums of money or even manors, whose income was to be given to the poor. Distributing this charity was enough to keep one man, the almoner, busy; for the poor and needy never failed to flock about the convent gate. Indeed, only part of this work could be done by the almoner; and if any of the poor folk or any monks were ill, they had to be given into the hands of the infirmarius for care and treatment. These were only a few of the offices. There was a terrier, who had special care of the guest rooms; a porter who guarded the gate and saw to it that no one entered who had not a right to be admitted; a chantor, who took

charge of the choral service and taught the monks to sing. There was a master of the novices who taught them to work and to meditate and to behave themselves properly in all respects. He even cared for their dress, and it was his business to get from the chamberlain the cowls, gowns, shoes, bedding, and other things that they needed. In every large convent, each division of the work and management required so much care and responsibility that there was hardly any limit to the number of officials.

The accounts of the convent were kept most minutely. There were no "sundries." Every dish, even every nail, must be accounted for, and the sheets must balance to the half of a farthing. Most convents were the "lords" of manors, sometimes a large number of manors; and even to keep the accounts of these, to say nothing of attending to their cultivation and the sale of the produce, must have been an enormous amount of work.

However earnestly a monk might wish to withdraw himself from the world, it was impossible for a large monastery to avoid having constant dealings with outsiders. Besides the buying and selling which were always necessary, a town frequently grew up on convent land, as has been said before, and therefore paid taxes

to the convent. But as the town grew larger and more independent, the townsfolk protested against these taxes, while the convent struggled as emphatically to collect them. Sometimes the contest came to a real hand to hand fight. In this the monks were not helpless by any means, for an abbot who controlled a number of manors could often call out several hundred men to take up arms for him. In one case in England the monks stood by their ancient right of grinding the townsfolk's corn and charging them a good price for so doing. The townsfolk, on the other hand, declared that in future they should grind their own corn. The quarrel grew, and the townsfolk actually besieged the convent for more than ten days before an agreement was reached. There were also quarrels with bishops and nobles, which often led to lawsuits, if not to blows and sieges. The monks took the stand that they owed obedience to the Pope and to no one else. But a convent was in the diocese of some bishop, and as time passed, most monks were ordained. Therefore the bishop naturally claimed some control over them. Such disagreements were sometimes settled by the archbishop, but oftener they were appealed to the Pope. It was excellent policy for monks and nobles to be friendly; but they watched

each other like cats and dogs. Nobles who knew themselves about to die and who hoped to win pardon for their sins by a rather belated generosity often made large gifts to convents. Naturally, the monks were pleased and the heirs of the nobles were not; and often it was a question which side would succeed in keeping hold of the land or treasure.

The work done by the monasteries of the Middle Ages was of the utmost value. In agriculture alone it can hardly be too highly estimated. The monks were the most skillful farmers of the time. They usually settled themselves in some desolate place. They cleared away the forests. They drained the swamps, and made the waste land into fruitful fields and gardens. They built roads and bridges. To the poor and oppressed the convents were friends and helpers. They lessened the burdens of the villeins on their own estates, and by their example those of the toilers on the lands of the nobles. They carried on schools, and in an age of the sword and the lance they maintained interest in education. They saved classical literature and much history of manners and customs, as well as records of the events of their own day. Moreover, however wealthy and perhaps luxurious some of the orders may have become, they stood,

nevertheless, before the greedy sovereigns and the lawless barons as reminders that they had been founded by men to whom riches and comfort were nothing in comparison with lives made pleasing to God.

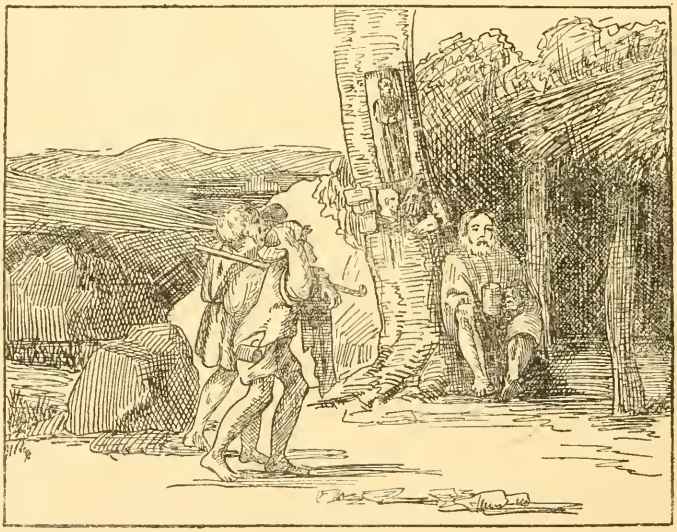
CHAPTER IX

Hermits, Friars, and Missionaries

When a hermit appears in a romance, he is generally described as an old man with picturesque gray beard and hair, and either a long gray cloak or a scanty robe of sackcloth. He has had wild adventures in his youth, has perhaps done some deeds of violence to which he occasionally refers darkly; but now he keeps lonely vigils, he flogs himself with briers and wears a hair shirt by way of atoning for his sins. He omits most of his meals, and when he does deign to eat, his food consists of a dry crust, a handful of cress, and a cup of water. Much of his time he spends in counting his beads. He cares nothing for money and despises comforts. His bed is the damp stone of his cave. His clothes he wears until they are ready to drop from him in pieces. His cell is always conveniently near the spot where some one has just been attacked by thieves and left on the ground as dead. He lifts the insensible sufferer to his shoulder, bears him to the cave, bathes his forehead with cool water from the spring, and then ap-

plies a wonder-working ointment, given him perhaps in his youth by some heathen Saracen; and, presto, in a day or two the man who had fallen among thieves is completely cured and either goes his way or else himself becomes a dweller in a cave of stone with a menu of cresses and water.

Such is the hermit of the romances; but the hermit of the Middle Ages was quite a different person. Sometimes, it is true, he made for himself a tiny abode deep in the forest or in the midst of some lonely desert, and sometimes he dug for himself a den in the side of a hill

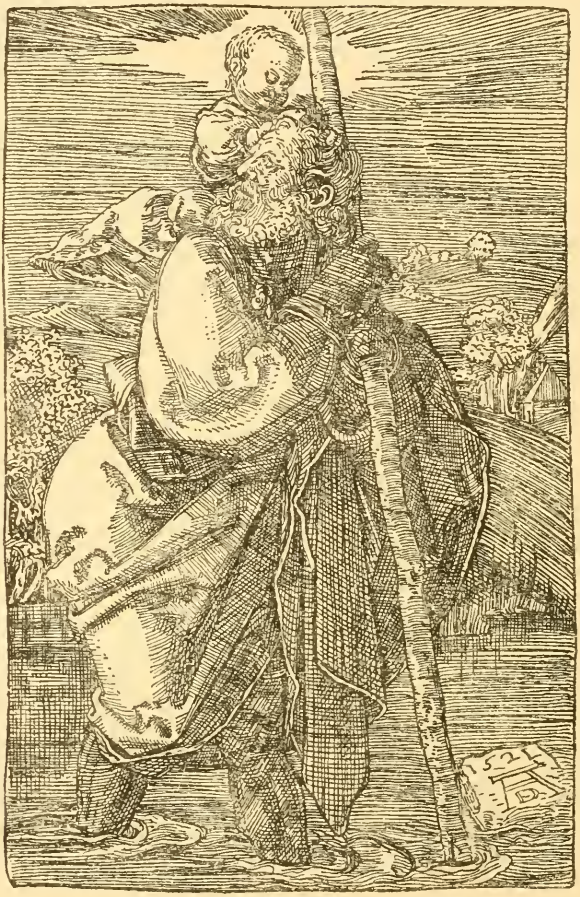


A HERMIT

or hewed out a rough cave in a cliff. Sometimes his abode was merely a hut of wattle-work or a sort of booth covered with branches; but often he dwelt in a comfortable little cottage of wood or stone on a highway. Occasionally several hermits grouped themselves together, each having his own cell, or rather cottage, and using one chapel. The hermit dressed much like the monks, usually in a robe of black or gray; though there is at least one old picture of a hermit wearing a cheery little red cap. He was generally drawn with a book, a bell to ring for mass and to drive away evil spirits, and a staff.

As to what the hermits did with themselves all day long, one must remember that there were almost as many kinds of hermits as there are of people. There are stories of hermits who became so absorbed in prayer that the hours passed like minutes; of one who was able to wear the same cloak for many years, because while he was praying, his friends quietly slipped it off, mended it, and laid it upon his shoulders again, without his discovering its absence. There were hermits who made themselves useful by taking up their abode near some dangerous fording place and carrying pilgrims on their shoulders across the stream. Such is the hero of the

legend of Saint Christopher, to whom a little child one day appealed to be borne over the river. The strong



ST. CHRISTOPHER

man took the child upon his shoulders and waded into the stream. But the burden grew heavier and heavier,

and he could hardly make his way across and stagger up the opposite bank. "Child," he said, "thou hast put me in great peril. I could bear no heavier burden." The child answered, "Marvel not, for to-day thou hast borne on thy shoulders the whole world and the weight of its sins."

A hermit of a sociable turn of mind sometimes built himself a hut beside a bridge. Bridges were troublesome comforts in those days. They were supposed to be cared for by the landowners within whose boundaries they stood; and the lords often collected toll for their use; but the one that was left entirely to their care would have been rather dangerous. No one could deny that bridges were useful, but to build a needed bridge or keep one in repair was everybody's business, and therefore it was nobody's business. So it came to pass that building a bridge or caring for one was looked upon as being as much of a religious act as going to church. People sometimes built a bridge by way of doing penance for their sins; or in their wills they left money for one for the same reason. Some of the gilds took certain roads and bridges under their charge as a religious duty. On the larger bridges chapels were sometimes built. It did not seem at all out of place, then,

for a hermit to establish himself beside a bridge and claim farthing gifts from travelers on the ground that he was caring for it. If they got safely over, it mattered little to them whether he spent all the money in repairs or not. They rode away with the comfortable feeling that they had done their duty and it had not cost much; and the hermit was reasonably sure of farthings enough for his needs.

But begging at bridges was not the hermit's only means of gaining a livelihood. The mere fact that a man lived in a certain place and depended upon charity for his food was sufficient to induce people to make him gifts, and to leave him money in their wills. Occasionally a wealthy man built a hermitage and endowed it just as one to-day might endow a hospital or a library.

One might, then, put on a hermit's garb with a sincere wish to withdraw from the temptations of the world and pass the time in prayer and meditation; or he might adopt the name of hermit as an easy, comfortable way of making a living without working for it. There were so many of these pretenders that in the laws they were often classed with beggars and vagabonds. They make themselves hermits "their ease to have," says the old poem of *Piers Plowman*. In England in the fourteenth

century it was forbidden for a man to call himself a hermit unless he had been formally pronounced one by his bishop; and there was a regular service for blessing a man and setting him apart to the solitary life. Some bishops went so far as to refuse to give a man the title of hermit unless provision had already been made for his maintenance.

Hermits were not the only people who withdrew from the world. There were also anchorites and anchoresses, who dwelt in little cells or houses attached often to some church or monastery. There was a service for the "enclosing" of a recluse. He was to be warned that it was no merit in him to shut himself away from others; but that he yielded to temptation or led others into wrong so easily that he was to be put into the cell as into a prison. This cell was sometimes a single room and sometimes a little house with a garden; but, whatever it was, the recluse was supposed never to leave it so long as he lived. If he had but a single room, it was to be of good size, to have three windows, — one for light, one through which food might be passed, and one opening into the church. Here the recluse prayed, read, wrote, and sometimes loaded himself with chains and bore severe penances;

or else lived at his ease and with a very moderate amount of discomfort. There is a quaint old book called *The Ancren Riwle*, or rule for anchoresses, written by a bishop of the thirteenth century, that gives a pretty good idea of the life of a woman recluse. She might sew, not on silken purses and such vanities, but on clothes for poor folk; or she might embroider vestments for the use of the church. She must not wear jewelry or ornamented girdles. She must be obedient to her bishop and to the Pope. In her room there was to be an altar and a cheery little fireplace; and the good bishop gives her express permission to keep a cat that may sit on the hearth and purr. She may even entertain her friends, though in rather an unsatisfactory fashion. Her maid is to see to it that everything is done for their comfort; but the hostess is only permitted to open her little window once or twice and make signs to them of the pleasure that their visit is giving her. The window seems to have been the greatest temptation of an anchoress; for the busy world was passing by that little opening, and it was harder to forget it than if she had been entirely shut away from it in a convent. The bishop warns her that she must never put her head out, and that she must not even hold lengthy conversa-

tions with any one through it; she may "sit and listen, and not cackle." Whether all the recluses were invariably obedient is a question.

Thousands of honest, conscientious men and women had given up their homes, their friends, and even the most innocent pleasures of the world to become monks or nuns or recluses, to live a life that they believed would make them acceptable to God. They taught those who came to their schools, and they fed the hungry folk who gathered at their gates; but there were hundreds of thousands of people who were not reached by the monks and nuns or even by the clergy; and orders were now formed whose business it was, not to remain in a cloister, but to go out into the world to preach the Gospel to the poor and needy and help them in every way possible. The men who joined these orders were known as preaching friars, from the Latin *fratres* and the French *frères*, meaning brothers. The founder was Saint Francis of Assisi, as he is now called. His father had made him a partner in his business; but the son's only idea of managing money was to give away all that came into his hands, and the father soon brought the partnership to an end. One in particular of the sayings of Jesus burned in the young man's heart, and he said it over and over to him-

self. It was, "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses; nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat." This command Jesus gave to his disciples when he sent them out two by two; and the honest young Francis made up his mind that in this way preachers ought still to go forth into the world. He laid down his staff, put off his shoes, flung away his purse, and fastened up his gown with a girdle of rope. He gave up all claim to his inheritance and went out among the people to tell them that God loved them, that Jesus had died, had risen, and was alive for evermore. A few other enthusiastic men joined him. He required that the vow of poverty should be a real one for them, both as individuals and as an order, that they should work with their hands for their food, and that, if work or wages failed, they should beg their bread from door to door. Charming little stories of the saint and his followers are told in the *Little Flowers of Saint Francis*. One tells us that he and "Brother Matteo" begged some crusts of bread and sat down on a stone beside a fountain to eat them. "O Brother Matteo, we are not worthy of this great treasure," Saint Francis exclaimed. But the matter-of-fact Brother Matteo replied, "How canst thou talk of a treas-

ure when we are so poor and in need of everything? We have neither cloth, nor knife, nor table, nor house to eat in, nor servant or maid to wait upon us." Saint Francis answered in all simplicity and sincerity, "And this is just the reason why I look upon it as a great treasure, because man has had no hand in it, but all has been given to us by divine Providence, as we clearly see in this beautiful table of stone, and in this clear fountain. Wherefore let us beg of God to make us love with all our hearts the treasure of holy poverty."

FRANCISCAN

The Franciscans went about doing good. The name that their founder chose for them was *Fratres Minores*, or the lesser brethren, for, as he said, none could be less, that is, of lower degree than they. They cared for the sick, and devoted themselves especially to the loathsome lepers, those sufferers who were driven out of the towns as too disgusting for folk to look upon. They journeyed everywhere, from England to Syria. They had no fear,

and without a thought of danger they went among the Mohammedans. Francis asked the sultan to have a great fire built, "And I will enter into it together with your priests," he said, "that you may see which religion is the true one." The sultan replied quietly that he hardly thought any of his priests would be willing to make the trial. He offered Francis many gifts, which the saint refused, and then sent him back to the Christian camp.

Francis insisted upon absolute poverty. He would not own even a breviary. A church was given him to be the headquarters of his order. He was glad to have its use, but he refused to own it; and each year he sent to the donors a basket of fish to indicate that it was not his but theirs. He loved animals, and if half the legends of his intercourse with them are true, they recognized this love; and dogs, doves, and even savage wolves trusted him. One of the most beautiful stories told of him is of his preaching to the birds. "My little sisters," he said, "you owe much to God, your Creator, and ought to sing his praises at all times and in all places, because he has given you liberty and the air to fly about in, and clothing for yourselves and for your young. He has given you fountains and rivers to quench your thirst, mountains and valleys in which to take refuge, and trees in which to

build your nests. Your Creator loves you much, and therefore he has bestowed such favors upon you. Beware,

ST. FRANCIS PREACHING TO THE BIRDS

my little sisters, of the sin of ingratitude, and study always to praise your Lord." The story declares that the little birds flapped their wings, bowed their heads to the

ground, and after he had made the sign of the cross to dismiss them, they rose from the earth and flew away in four directions, all singing most sweetly.

Saint Francis cared little for the learning that comes from books; but educated men were charmed with his sincerity and his lovable character and became his followers. An order of Franciscan nuns was formed, the Poor Ladies; and also the order of the Penitent Men and Women. The members of this third order might remain in the world, but they were to dress simply, to abstain from worldly amusements, to bear no arms save in defence of their country or the Church, and to pay strict attention to the required fasts and times of special devotion. The dress of the Minorites varied somewhat in different countries. In England they wore gray; and therefore in that country they were often called the Gray Friars.

The Dominicans were founded by Saint Dominic of Spain, and from the start this order was made up of men of learning. There are many pleasant legends of Dominic in his younger days. One says that when he was baptized, a brilliant star shone upon his forehead. It is said that in time of famine he sold not only his clothes, but even his beloved books to feed the hungry. Once he even offered to sell himself. He found a poor woman in great distress

because her son had been taken captive by the Moors. "Sell me for a slave," he said eagerly, "and then you will have money enough to ransom him."

The Dominicans were often called the Black Friars because of the black cloaks that they wore. They took the same vows of poverty as the Franciscans. Dominic allowed in their cells a bedstead and a rude bench and nothing else. Even in the church ornaments were forbidden, and the sacred vestments must not be made of silk or adorned in any way.

DOMINICAN FRIAR

These two mendicant, or begging, orders went up and down the countries of Europe, caring for the poor and preaching to them. They always made their journeys on foot. Saint Dominic carried a bundle on his shoulder and a stick in his hand. In passing through towns he wore shoes; but after he had left a town behind him, he went barefooted; and the sharper the thorns or the stones of the road, the more cheery he appeared.

There was need of preaching. The crusaders had learned of Mohammedanism, and some had actually given up their Christian faith and adopted the belief of the Saracens. While there were thousands upon thousands who loved the Church and believed all that she taught, there were other thousands who stood off at one side and criticised and refused to obey her commands. Then something more than persuasion was used. The disobedient son was excommunicated, that is, he was shut out of the church, and was treated like an outcast. His nearest friends, even his own family, were forbidden to help him in any way. They were not even allowed to sit at table with him. If he died before being reconciled to the Church, it was taught that he would suffer punishment forever. If this man happened to be a king and remained obstinate, his whole kingdom was laid under an interdict. Churches were closed throughout the land; children could not be christened; marriages could not be solemnized; no services could be held at the burial of the dead.

Now an interdict sometimes lasted for a number of years, and it worked in more than one way. It usually forced a king to yield; but the people who were true to the Church it made desolate and miserable; and those

who were inclined to be careless it made reckless and defiant. Strange, new beliefs sprang up that were contrary to the teachings of the Church. The Poor Men of Lyons, or Waldenses, taught that there was no reason why men should obey the clergy. The Albigenses, who lived in southern France between the Garonne and the Rhone rivers, believed that the world had been made, not by God, but by Satan, and that there was continual warfare going on between the two powers, one of good and one of evil. These heresies must be put down, the Church authorities declared, or soon there would be a terrible struggle.

It had happened that on one of his journeys Dominic had spent the night in the house of a man who belonged to the Albigenses. All night long they talked of the faith; and before the traveler went on his way in the morning, he had convinced his host that the way of the Church was the only true way. He now went among the Albigenses, and did his best to convert them, but without success. They were protected by the Count of Toulouse; and by the Pope's orders war was waged against him. Their towns were destroyed, and large numbers of men, women, and children were slaughtered. In Italy there were many heretics; and the emperor commanded that

those who were proved guilty should be burned at the stake. Other countries followed his example. A system known as the Inquisition was established; and now any one suspected of heresy could be brought before officials appointed by the Church and examined with tortures too horrible to relate. If he was pronounced guilty, he was given over to the "secular arm," that is, to the state, and was burned to death. It was a terrible time; but it must be remembered that religious freedom was unheard of, and that any belief contrary to that of the Church was looked upon by churchmen as a crime against God which his followers were bound to destroy. Even a man so gentle and merciful as Saint Louis of France did not hesitate for a moment to punish heretics with the utmost severity. For this work of the Inquisition members of the Franciscan and Dominican orders were usually chosen, because their vow of poverty would keep them from accepting bribes. People gazed scornfully at the magnificent buildings of the other monastic orders and said, "And those people have taken the vow of poverty!" but there was no question that the mendicant friars were as poor as the poorest. No one could think for a moment that they were not in earnest, and great numbers of people joined the orders. For some years the friars were not

allowed to teach theology in the universities; but the learned professors of theology sometimes resigned their positions and became Franciscans or Dominicans.

It is not easy to be in the very midst of life and still live entirely apart from the wishes and ambitions of those round about. People felt such reverence for the begging friars that money was almost forced upon them; and after a while they began to feel the same ambition for the greatness, not of themselves, but of their orders, that was felt by the monks. Their character changed, but in time there came reform and a return in some degree to the ideals of their founders.

Somewhat earlier than the formation of these orders of monks and friars that have been described, zealous, enthusiastic missionaries preached the Gospel in the countries of western Europe. Two of the most famous of them were Saint Patrick in the sixth century and Saint Augustine in the seventh. Saint Patrick is thought to have been captured by pirates when he was about fifteen years of age and sold as a slave in Ireland. For six long years he led a lonely life, tending sheep on the mountain side. He had no one to talk to, and he began to talk to God. Sometimes, he says, he poured out his prayers a hundred times a day. His eyes were

wide open for a chance to escape; and at the end of the sixth year he succeeded in making his way to his old home in Scotland. But in his dreams he often heard the voices of the Irish calling, "Come and teach us of the Christ"; and he went to France to study and prepare to be a missionary. When he was ready, he returned to Ireland in a little boat. "Pirates, master, there are pirates on the shore!" cried a herdsman. But when the master and his people came with arms to drive the pirates away, they found a little group of people of such noble and dignified bearing that instead of attacking them, he asked them to be his guests; and he and his family soon became Christians.

SAINT PATRICK

Easter was at hand, and Saint Patrick, as was the custom, kindled an Easter fire. This time was also a festival among the heathen in honor of the goddess of spring; and when king Leoghaire went out to light his

own fire, behold, he saw one burning on the hill of Slane. The law of the land was that while the king's fire was ablaze, no other should burn in all the country around. The penalty of breaking this law was death. Leoghaire sent in wrath for these bold strangers to be brought before him to defend themselves. This was just what the fearless missionary wanted. On Easter Sunday, he and his companions in their fresh white robes came into the presence of the king, and told him of the religion of Christ. He listened closely, and gave them permission to preach in his dominions wherever they might choose. This was the beginning of Saint Patrick's preaching. Up and down the land he and his friends journeyed, teaching the people and founding churches; and when he died, at a good old age, the whole country mourned for him.

It is thought that there were Christians in some parts of Ireland even before the coming of Saint Patrick; but no one knows how the faith of Christ first became known in the land. In England, too, the earlier inhabitants, the Britons, had learned Christianity; but they had been either slain or driven to the westward by the Saxons. These Saxons were heathen; and in the seventh century, Saint Augustine was sent by the Pope to preach

to them. He landed on the Island of Thanet and sent word to King Ethelbert, "We are come from Rome, and we have brought a joyful message. It assures to all who receive it everlasting happiness in heaven, and a kingdom that will never end, with the living and true God."

Now the king had married a Frankish princess who was a Christian, and probably this was why he was willing to listen to these strangers. He was a little afraid that they might bewitch him, however, and when he came to hear what they had to say, he refused to enter a house, and seated himself in the open air where no magic arts would have effect. He listened to their preaching; and then told them that, although their words were fair, they were new, and he could not forsake the belief which he and the nation had followed so long. "But I will provide you with a house in Canterbury," he said, "with food and whatever else you need, and you may preach and gain as many as you can to your faith."

So the missionaries preached and prayed. They held services in the queen's church, and by and by the king himself became a Christian. Then he gave the preachers a settled home in Canterbury and property

enough to supply all their needs. So it was that the faith of Christ was preached in England. The king was ready to build monasteries and churches. Sometimes he built them from the foundation, and sometimes he repaired a building left by the Romans. In Canterbury there was an old church which some of the Romans who were Christians had built and used. This he had put in order. In later years the more modern church that took its place became the cathedral of Canterbury to which so many pilgrims went to pray at the shrine of Thomas à Becket.

In Germany a number of Irish priests worked among the people in the early part of the seventh century; but when Saint Boniface came from England in 717, he wrote to the Pope that "for sixty or seventy years past religion had vanished." He set to work most heartily to persuade the people of Hesse that the religion of Christ was true. Some believed what he taught and became sincere Christians. Many, however, were inclined to accept this new teaching, but were a little afraid of what their old gods might do to them if they should desert them entirely. When they were in quiet and safety, they were willing to trust the God of the Christians; but when they were in danger, especially if out

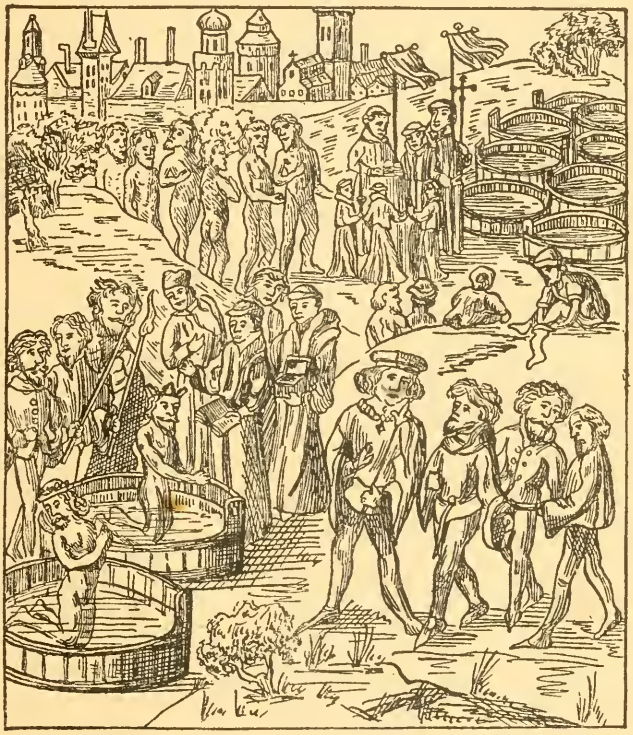
on a stormy ocean, they thought it was more prudent to call upon Odin and Thor. Boniface discovered that some of the people who had been baptized as Christians were in the habit of slipping away into the woods, out of the sight of the priests, and there offering up sacrifices to trees and springs. Many, too, were practicing divination and soothsaying. The wise missionary consulted with some of the most sincere and courageous among his followers, and they decided what to do to prove to these half-hearted folk that they need have no fear of their old gods. It seems that there was an immense oak tree in the land sacred to the god Thor, and therefore called the Oak of Thor. The missionary took an axe, and he and his faithful followers went straight to the sacred tree. Then the timid folk were thoroughly frightened. He raised his axe and struck a blow. "He is the enemy of the gods," cried the people, and they called down bitter curses upon him, and stood trembling with fear. No one knew what would happen, but they believed that at the very least fire would burst out and destroy this daring preacher. But Boniface kept on until he had cut into the trunk a little way; when, behold, a gentle breeze rustled the upper leaves, and suddenly the top of the tree snapped off and broke into four parts —

at any rate, that is the tradition. Then the people said to one another, "That is surely the power of the Christian God." They left off cursing the preacher and began to praise God. Boniface built an oratory from the wood of the tree. He founded monasteries where the monks worked on the soil and copied books, helped the poor, and showed hospitality to travelers. He longed to die as a martyr, and his wish was granted. On one of his journeys down the Rhine, a crowd of the heathen suddenly rushed out of the woods. He thought that they were coming to ask for baptism, but instead of that they attacked him to get the booty which they supposed he had with him. He forbade his followers to protect him by the shedding of blood; and holding the book of the Gospels over his head, he met the martyrdom that he desired.

Not all the missionary work was done by monks and saints. There were kings who converted many to baptism, but by methods decidedly different from the persuasions and arguments of the good missionaries. One of the two kings was Charlemagne. His people, the Franks, had become Christians; but on their borders were the heathen Saxons. There was constant trouble between the two peoples, and at length Charlemagne

set out to conquer the Saxons, and in the warlike fashion of the day, to make them Christians. Now, just as the people of Hesse had a sacred oak, so the Saxons had a sacred statue, which stood northwest of what is now Cassel. It represented a warrior holding a banner in one hand and a balance in the other. On his breastplate was a bear, to indicate courage. On his shield was pictured a lion resting on a bed of flowers, to express the idea that to the fearless warrior battle was a time of enjoyment. It is probable that in the first place the statue represented one Arminius who won a great victory over the Romans, and that its name, Irminsul, had been originally Arminius. It stood on a high pillar. Priests lived near it to offer up sacrifices, often prisoners taken in war, and priestesses here practiced incantations and soothsaying. Charlemagne destroyed the Irminsul, and pushed on until the Saxons were subdued. He told them that they must promise to be faithful to him and that they must be baptized. They had little choice in the matter, for if they refused, the headsman with his axe stood waiting. If they submitted, the royal missionary was ready to reward them with gifts. Naturally, they promised whatever he wished; and the converts were escorted to the banks of the Lippe River. Thither

came the priests and monks and bishops of the Franks. Charlemagne and his nobles became sponsors, and these fierce new Christians were baptized without delay. In-



CHARLEMAGNE INFLICTING BAPTISM ON THE SAXONS

deed, it is said that somewhat later they found the new faith so profitable in the matter of white robes and baptismal gifts of ornaments and weapons that they came every Easter in increasing numbers. The old story says

that on one occasion fifty bold Northmen presented themselves for baptism. There were not enough robes of white linen prepared, and therefore garments were hastily cut out of whatever cloth could be obtained and sewed up roughly like bags. One of the new converts cried in a rage, "I have been baptized here twenty times before, and every time I was clothed in the best of white garments; and now you give me a sack better fitted to a swineherd than a warrior."

This was in the reign of a weaker king than Charlemagne, but even in his day the Saxons revolted again and again and struggled for their freedom. They destroyed the churches and tore down the crosses. Whenever they came to a convent, they left it in ruins. Saint Boniface had been buried at the convent of Fulda. The monks caught up his body as their greatest treasure and fled for their lives. Wittekind, leader of the Saxons, finally became a Christian convert and a most zealous one. There is a tradition that he made his way into Charlemagne's camp in disguise as a spy, and that he chanced to enter the tent where mass was being celebrated. Just at that moment the priest was elevating the consecrated bread, and as the heathen chieftain gazed in amazement and curiosity, a light shone out from the

host, and in the light he saw a wonderfully beautiful child, the Christ Child. The tradition says that Wittekind was discovered and taken to Charlemagne, that he begged to be baptized and to enter the church, and became an ardent teacher of his people.

Another imperial missionary was King Olaf Trygvasson of Norway. He had a wild, strange boyhood. He was captured by pirates and sold as a slave. He became a fearless viking, and succeeded in making his way back to Norway and getting possession of his great-grandfather's throne. In Longfellow's *Saga of King Olaf*, he says that the king was

> Trained for either camp or court,
> Skilful in each manly sport,
> Young and beautiful and tall;
> Art of warfare, art of chases,
> Swimming, skating, snow-shoe races,
> Excellent alike in all.

King Olaf loved warfare, the din of armor, and the flashing of steel, and one of his commands to his *skald*, or poet, was

> Sing me a song divine,
> With a sword in every line.

It was probably on one of his viking voyages to England that he became a Christian. He was as much in

earnest in his religion as in his fighting, and he set to work to make his countrymen Christians whether they would or not. Christianity was not new in Norway; but the Norwegians had little idea of giving up the old ways. King Olaf persuaded, he bribed, he threatened, he even tortured; and before his reign of five years was at an end, he had made Norway an exceedingly uncomfortable place for any one who persisted in worshiping heathen gods. In a fascinating old book, *The Heimskringla*, or *Chronicles of the Kings of Norway*, which has been translated from the Icelandic, are the stories of Olaf. Longfellow has put many of them into verse. At one time when King Olaf had called a meeting of his people, they came fully armed to demand that he restore the old worship of the gods and offer up sacrifices. Olaf was a match for them. He said, "If I, along with you, shall turn again to making sacrifices, then will I make the greatest sacrifices. I will not offer up slaves or malefactors, but men of note and high degree." He named eleven of the prominent men present, and ordered them to be seized at once. Then he strode into the temple and smote the images of Thor and Odin and the other gods and dashed them to the floor. Without the temple there was a sound of fighting between the

men at arms and the peasants. There was a shout of triumph and a wail of sorrow; and as Olaf stood in the doorway, he saw the dead body of Iron-Beard, strongest of his foes. Longfellow thus tells the ending of this story of King Olaf's missionary work: —

> King Olaf from the doorway spoke:
> "Choose ye between two things, my folk,
> To be baptized or given up to slaughter!"
>
> And seeing their leader stark and dead,
> The people with a murmur said,
> "O King, baptize us with thy holy water."

This fashion of carrying on missions in the eleventh century was little like the methods pursued in the twentieth; but no one can say that it was not at least energetic and sincere.

CHAPTER X

LIFE IN TOWN

Some of the towns in Europe had existed since the days of the Romans, but those that grew up during the Middle Ages were usually situated near some convent or castle. A large convent served as an inn for travelers; it had the care of many manors; and often it was also a school and a place of pilgrimage. The castle, too, entertained a large number of guests and controlled numerous manors. Men were needed at both places for all sorts of work, and there was a sale for whatever they produced. Moreover, they were sure of protection; and these were three good reasons why people should make their homes under the walls of convents and castles. Occasionally it came to pass that a manor village grew into a town. If it chanced to have a particularly strong manor house with moat and heavy stone walls, it might put up fortifications and prove itself so valuable as a defense that the lord was very willing to have it become a town. He would give it a charter, or written promise of privileges and protection; and this would bring many more people within its

walls to increase his income by their taxes. Sometimes a town was founded by a king or noble, who decided that a certain place was a good location. The story is told that once when Edward I of England was on a hunting expedition, his attention was attracted to a tiny village on the wide river Humber near which some shepherds were watching their flocks. "That would be a most excellent place for a fortress," he said to himself, "and a city there would be sure to carry on a great deal of commerce." He asked the shepherds how deep the river was and to what height the tides rose. The land belonged to a convent, but the abbot was willing to take other land in exchange. Then the king published a charter, declaring the rights that he would give to all merchants who would carry on their business in the place. So it was that the town of Hull was founded. A wall and towers were built for defense, and the settlement flourished. The fact that it is to-day a city of a quarter of a million of inhabitants proves the wisdom of Edward in choosing its location. Such a made-to-order town was commonly spoken of as the *new town* or the *free town*. Sometimes it never received any other title; and that is why we have such names as Neustadt and Freiburg in Germany, Villanueva and Villafranca in Spain and Villeneuve and Ville-

franche in France. King Edward was not so fortunate in another of his towns, that of Winchelsea. The old settlement had been washed away by the ocean, and the king laid out another one on a new site two miles away. But the French had their eyes open, and they pounced down upon it before the walls were done. People did not take a liking to it, and in spite of the king's efforts, it never flourished. Curiously enough, within the last four hundred years, the sea, which had laid the old town in ruins, has retreated from the new town, and the former seaport is now a village a mile and a half from the ocean and surrounded by a salt marsh.

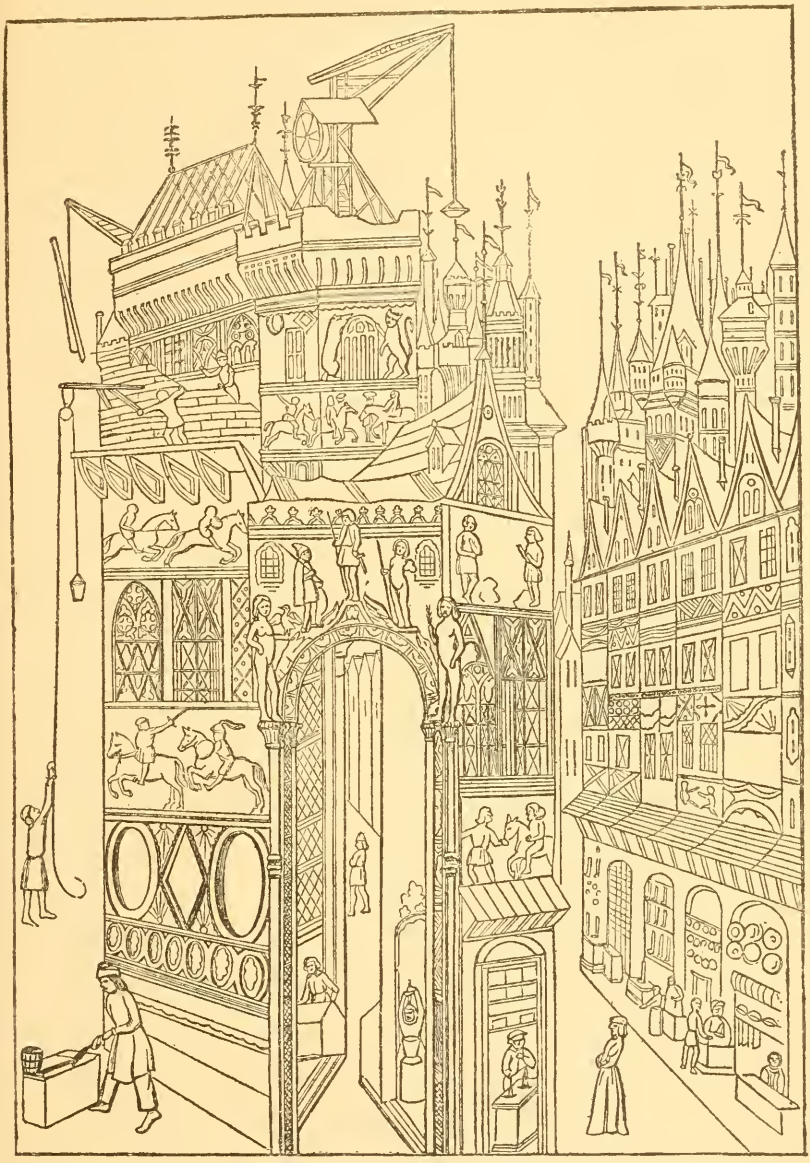
Italian towns were stronger and larger than those of France. Each one held wide-spreading territories, and therefore the whole country was really in their hands. Spain had chartered communities earlier than France or England. In these Spanish towns citizens of a certain amount of property paid no taxes; but if fighting men were needed to protect the country, they were bound to serve and also to provide horses for themselves at their own expense. For this reason, a man's horse could not be seized for debt. In France, the citizens must defend their land if necessary; but they could be called out for only a limited time and to a certain distance from the

walls of their home city. There was another law which also tended to make them somewhat independent. This was that before they agreed to enter upon any piece of military service, they had a right to take into account the nature of the cause for which they were called into service. This was an excellent arrangement; for if two nobles, for instance, took up arms because of some trivial quarrel, the citizens could not be forced to join in it.

A town, then, in the Middle Ages was simply a large village with walls and towers. It had special privileges, granted by the king or by the convent or the noble in whose province it was situated, and it was sure to gain more either by purchase or by some shrewd bargaining with the owner in his time of need. A town usually had many customs peculiar to itself. At Chester in England, if a fire caught in a man's house and the flames spread, he must pay his next neighbor two shillings, and pay the town a fine of five shillings. In some of the English towns it was the rule for the mayor and corporation to walk once a year around the boundaries, inspecting the landmarks. A company of children were taken with them, and in order to impress the limits upon their minds, copper coins were given to them at each turning; a far more agreeable method than the old Roman fashion of

sacrificing a lamb or a pig at every corner. To be called a city, a town must be the residence of the bishop. For a long while, a town was as much a piece of private property as a manor. Its lord could sell it if he chose, and the citizens could do nothing to hinder him. The value was somewhat in proportion to its size. It was therefore of advantage to the owner to have the number of inhabitants increase, and strangers were usually welcome.

The walls about a town were thick and high. Watchmen were always on guard to give the alarm at the approach of an enemy. The houses were built of various materials. There were cottages of mud, and there were comfortable residences of brick. Some were built of wood with the framework arranged in elaborate patterns. Others were ornamented with plaster decorations and painted panels. In many cases, the lower story was of stone and the rest of the house of wood. Roofs thatched with straw or reeds were common for a long while; but at length it was required that tiles should be used. Windows were sometimes glazed, and sometimes the space was filled in with wooden lattice work. There were churches and inns for travelers, and there was always a town hall in which the business of the town was transacted. The town halls on the Continent



A MEDIÆVAL STREET AND TOWN HALL

were larger and more splendid than those in England; but the English halls were not to be ashamed of by any means; for it was a matter of pride with a town to have as handsome a hall as could be afforded.

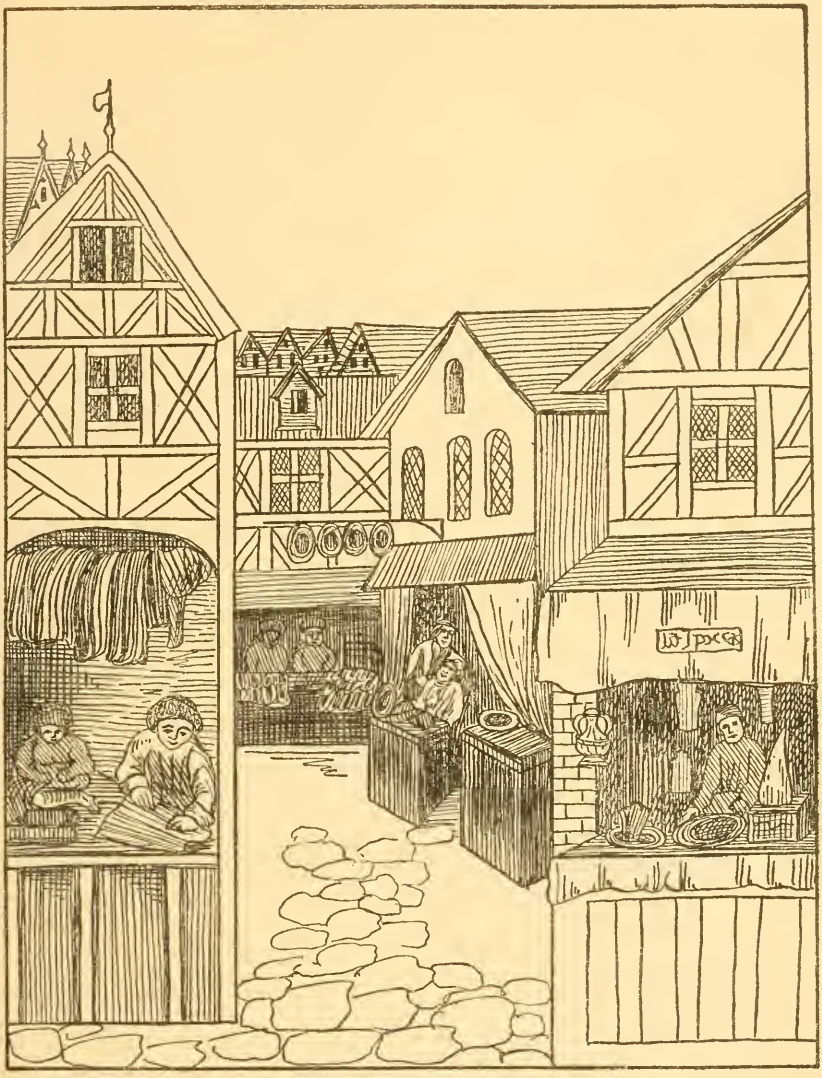
By far the greater number of people in a city were either craftsmen, that is, manufacturers of various articles, or merchants. To become a craftsman required a long training. If a boy wished to be a carpenter, for instance, his parents selected some master carpenter and asked him to take their son as an apprentice. If he was willing, both parents and master signed a formal agreement. The parents gave their son into the charge of the master for a fixed number of years, promising on the boy's part that he would be obedient and diligent and would not tell any of his master's secrets. The master agreed to give the boy a home and his clothes and to teach him all that he himself knew about the carpenter's trade. The boy was not supposed to be of much service during the first years of his apprenticeship; but long before the end of his time had come, he was expected to be able to assist his master enough to pay him for all previous trouble and expense.

After the boy had learned the trade and his time was up, he became a journeyman. This name is thought to

have come from the French *journée*, meaning *day*, because he worked by the day. Many journeymen never rose any higher, but an industrious workman could soon save enough money to set up for himself, which meant becoming a master, having a shop in his own house, hiring journeymen, and taking apprentices. Providing himself with tools was not a difficult matter, for they were few and simple. Two axes, an adze, a square, and a spokeshave were all that were necessary; and their combined cost was only one shilling. Materials were often supplied by the customers. No journeyman was allowed to become a master until he had presented a *masterpiece*, or an excellent piece of carpentry to the gild, or society of carpenters, and had thus shown to them that he was able to do work that would meet with their approval.

The merchants varied in rank from the great importer whose vessels sailed wherever desirable exports could be found to the small tradesman whose little shop was in his own house. Some of these merchants were both rich and generous, and attained to high positions in affairs of state. They built for themselves handsome houses that were probably decidedly more comfortable than the castles of the time. The house of one of the

smaller traders was usually a combination of shop and home and storehouse. The building was generally narrow and high with a gable overlooking the street. In the gable was a door, and from this door a crane projected. The lower floor was a basement or cellar. The first floor was given up to the shop. Above that was the living room, and back of the living room was the kitchen. The floor above was the general sleeping room, and over this was the great garret. This was used as a storeroom, and goods were lifted to it by means of the crane in the gable. Often a "salesroom" was merely a bench under a porch. Here whatever the workman made was spread out for the passers-by to see, and purchase if they would. Many signs swung over the street, and on each of them was painted some device to suggest the business of the house. The boar's head — a favorite Christmas dish — was often adopted as a tavern sign. The pilgrims in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* spent the night at the Tabard Inn; and doubtless this had a wooden sign representing a tabard, or sleeveless jacket worn over armor. The Flying Horse was the name of a tavern in Canterbury, and we can easily guess what the sign must have been. The ivy was sacred to Bacchus, the god of wine, and therefore the custom arose of putting a spray of vine or even



SHOPS ON THE STREET

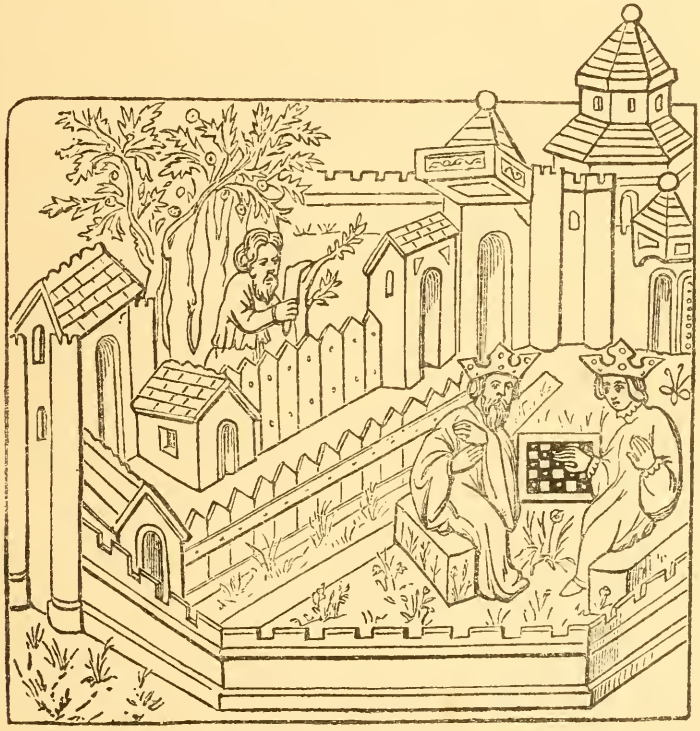
a green bush over the door of a place where wine was sold. To this day the mortar and pestle often indicate an apothecary's; the shop of the pawnbroker is marked

A MEDIÆVAL HOTEL

not by a name, but by three golden balls, taken from the arms of the Lombards, the first great money-lenders in England; and the twining stripes of the barber's pole signify either the flowing blood or the bandages used in

bleeding, for in early times the barbers were also the bleeders.

The streets in mediæval days were narrow and, except in made-to-order towns, they were crooked and rambling. The upper stories of the houses often projected so far over them that opposite neighbors could almost shake hands from their windows. In front, the



A MEDIÆVAL GARDEN SCENE

houses must have been rather gloomy, but back of them there were usually gardens, which must have been a great delight to the good folk of the time; for they not only walked in them, but played chess and danced and ate their dinners in them. In England, lilies and roses seem to have been the favorite flowers; but marigolds, poppies, violets, and foxgloves were often seen. Many plants were cultivated as medicines, among them sage, mallows, and nightshade. In the vegetable gardens there were lettuce, cresses, onions, melons, cucumbers, and beets. Apples and pears were common, and cherries seem to have been well known and general favorites. Every year, when the cherries were ripe, feasts or fairs were held in the orchards, which were called cherry fairs. People seemed never to weary of trying experiments on the cherry tree. An old book on gardening declared that grapes could be made to ripen as early as cherries. This is the way it was to be done: A grapevine must be set out beside a cherry tree; and after it was growing thriftily, it must be drawn through a hole bored through the tree. The bark of the vine was to be cut away from the part that went through the tree, and the hole must be completely filled. After a year had passed, the vine was supposed to be so much

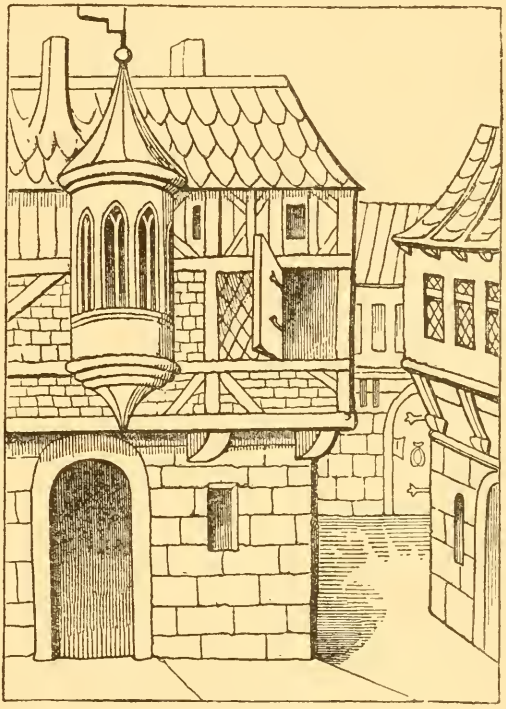
at home in the tree that its own roots might be cut off, and it would find its food in the sap of the cherry. It was a faithful monk who gave this recipe; but one cannot help wondering whether he had ever tested it or only reasoned it out in his cell; and whether, even if it was a success in the fifteenth century, the daring gardener who ventured to try it in the twentieth would not come to grief. Any one who is more fond of pomegranates than peaches may wish to try another recipe that seems to have been in good standing at about the same time. This one bade that when the peach-tree was in bloom, it should be sprinkled with goat's milk several times a day for three days, whereupon it would not fail to produce pomegranates. Surely this was a far simpler and easier method than grafting. There was ample opportunity for even the Londoners to try all such experiments; for, besides the smaller gardens within the city, there were large and spacious orchards just beyond the walls with plenty of room for trees of all sorts.

Outside the city wall was a ditch or moat two hundred feet broad. This was dug in the early part of the thirteenth century as a means of fortification; and for many years it was kept in good order. At length, however, it became so foul that every householder in Lon-

don was taxed fivepence, the price of a day's work, to help pay for cleaning it out. More agreeable waters abounded on the north side of the city; for there lay pastures and meadow land rich in springs and streams. The springs were all named, and a number of them were walled in. Richard Whittington, the hero of the nursery tale, "thrice lord mayor of London," left money to build a stone coping about one of them. In the thirteenth century water was brought into the city in lead pipes, "for the poor to drink, and the rich to dress their meat." In the clear streams the mill-wheels turned merrily about, and the crops grew abundantly in the fertile soil.

Toward the end of the twelfth century a law was passed that the lower parts of houses at least should be built of stone and the roofs should be covered with slate or tile. This was to prevent destruction by fire. William Fitzstephen, clerk of Thomas à Becket, archbishop of Canterbury, wrote an account of London in his time, the latter part of the twelfth century, and he says that "the only pests of London are the immoderate drinking of fools and the frequency of fires." Some years later, a man built a house with a lofty tower of brick, which seems to have greatly annoyed the Londoners. They

looked upon it as manifesting a desire on the part of the owner to show himself superior to his neighbors; and folk thought that the blindness which came upon him was a deserved punishment for his pride. The second house that was built with a tower "to overlook neighbors" was reared by a young tailor. The poor young man was soon attacked by gout and was not able to climb his own stairs; and this was rather uncharitably regarded as a judgment come upon him. It is possible that the next owner of this house did not venture to retain the tower; for the record says "he new buildeth it." No historian has handed down the name of the person who built the third tower,



A TOWN HOUSE

but it must have been a man of unbounded fearlessness and audacity.

Even stonebuilt houses were not places of safety in the troublous times of the twelfth century. It was a common practice for bands of wealthy young men to roam the streets at night, killing any one whom they chanced to meet and breaking into houses. One of these fashionable ruffians was finally captured. He offered the king five hundred pounds of silver to let him go free; but the king commanded him to be hanged, and for a long while citizens slept more peacefully.

One convenience of the city Fitzstephen felt to be the very height of luxury. This was a cookshop on the bank of the river. He says that if unexpected visitors arrived, their host could slip down to the river bank, and there he would find fish, fowl, and meat, fried, roasted, or boiled, as he would, to carry to his hungry guests. Fitzstephen had unlimited confidence in the resources of this cookshop, for he declared that, no matter how great a multitude of soldiers or travelers entered the city at any hour of the day or night, they could be quickly served with all the delicacies of the season. Either the "multitude" of the Middle Ages was not so very large, or this really was a most remarkable cookshop.

Life in Town

London had many churches, and it was well supplied with hospitals. These latter were for the blind or poor or insane or for lepers. Richard Whittington endowed an almshouse which he called "God's House," for thirteen poor men. Thirteen was a favorite number in charities; but often there were restrictions far more whimsical than this. At the close of the fifteenth century, somewhat later than the Middle Ages, King Henry VII endowed a home for thirteen poor men. One must be a priest, forty-five years old and a "good grammarian." The other twelve men were to be fifty years of age and without wives. Every Saturday as long as they lived, the priest was to receive fourpence a day for his food. The others, who perhaps were not so good grammarians, were to receive only twopence-half-penny a day. Every year each man was given a gown and hood. The charge of the house, the cooking, and the care of the poor men in illness was put into the hands of three women, each of whom was to receive one gown each year and sixteen pence every Saturday. Coal and wood were provided; and it was ordered that "a discreet monk," who was to be paid forty shillings a year, but was to receive no gown, should be overseer of all.

Many persons of wealth gave away food in large quan-

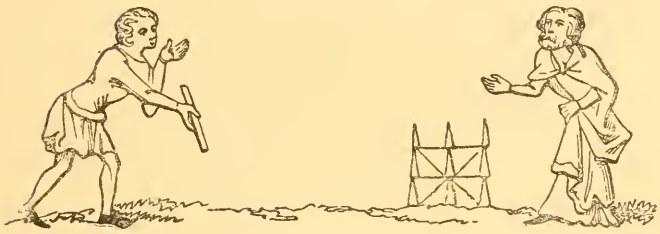
tities. One kind-hearted bishop had every week more than two hundred pounds of wheat made into bread to give to the poor. One of the archbishops of Canterbury gave on Fridays and Sundays a loaf of bread to every beggar who came to his gates; and sometimes there were five thousand of them. To people who were too sick or too feeble to come, he sent meat, bread, and drink, and often money and clothes. One of the oddest of charitable whims was that of Henry III in the twelfth century. Soon after the close of the Christmas season, all the poor and needy boys and girls that could be found were brought into a great hall and made comfortable before a big fire. Soon they saw a rare and wonderful sight, for the king's children, the princes and princesses, were led into the room. These royal youngsters were carefully weighed, and a quantity of food equal to their weight was distributed among their hungry guests.

There seems to have been a good supply of schools in London, for in the twelfth century there were three especially notable and also a number of lesser fame. These were connected with churches, and upon festival days people flocked to their doors to listen to the boys. The good folk of that time believed that the surest proof of a pupil's diligence and talent was his ability to argue; and

on these occasions the boys did their best to get the better of one another in argument. The listeners watched eagerly to see who used good, clear, logical reasoning, who manifested skill in persuasion, and who spoke flowingly, with a lavish supply of words, but with few genuine arguments. After the more serious part of the programme had come to an end, the boys had a bout of capping verses, in Latin of course, and contending about the rules and principles of grammar. Then came an hour of vast amusement; for now they set to work to make witty rhymes and speeches about one another. They were not allowed to mention names; but they were free to jest as keenly as they chose about one another's faults and oddities, "nipping and quipping their fellows." Long after the formal school exercises in the churches had been given up, the boys used to go to Smithfield, or *smooth field*, just outside the city, for their duels of argument. A platform had been built up under a tree, and upon this a boy would take his stand, make some statement in grammar or philosophy, and uphold it until he was argued down by some boy of keener wit. This second boy then mounted the platform and upheld some statement of his own choice until he, too, was obliged to yield. At the close of the arguing, prizes were given to

those who had done best. After a while these debates were given up; but the tradition was handed down by one class of boys to another, and even in the sixteenth century, they were continued in a fashion that perhaps entertained the boys quite as much as the more formal displays of earlier times. The most famous school in the thirteenth century was that of the cathedral of Saint Paul's. Its pupils were called "Paul's pigeons" because many pigeons were bred about the church. A later, but most excellent school, was that of Saint Anthony's. There was a legend that this kind-hearted saint had been followed about by a favorite pig. No boy would forget that story, and of course the pupils of Saint Anthony's were nicknamed "Anthony's pigs." When a company of "Paul's pigeons" chanced to meet some of "Anthony's pigs" in the street, some boy from one group was sure to demand of the other group, "Will you hold an argument with me?" This was a challenge which could not be slighted. Some question in Latin grammar was chosen, and the contest proceeded, first by argument, but before long by blows with fists and satchels of books. The challenge was always made in Latin, "Salve tu quoque, placet tibi mecum disputare?" but it came to mean little more than the very modern, "Hello, want to fight?"

A GAME AT BALL



THE GAME OF KALES

WHIPPING-TOP

But the amusements of London were not limited to Latin contests and street brawls. On Shrove Tuesday of each year, the schoolboys carried game cocks to school, and all the forenoon master and pupils watched them fight. In the afternoon, the young men of the city went to the ball ground to play, while their elders cantered out on horseback to watch the game. Every Friday in Lent some of the young men went through various manœuvres on horseback, and others with shields and blunted lances carried on a mimic war. After a while this was given up, and the knights' practice with the quintain took its place. Prizes were given to those who did best. The favorite prize was a peacock. At Easter time, the banks of the Thames, the wharves, bridges, and houses were filled with people waiting to see an interesting sort of naval contest. A pole was firmly fixed in the midst of the stream, and on it a shield was hung. The young man who was to try his fate took his position with lance in hand in the bow of a little boat some distance above the pole. He had neither oars nor paddle, but the current filled the place of both, for a time was always chosen when the tide was going out rapidly. The feat was to charge upon the shield with the lance and not lose one's balance. If the lance did not break, the contestant was

sure to tumble into the water. The unlucky youth was in no danger; for on each side of the shield were two boats full of men to rescue him; but the shouts of laughter that echoed up and down the river must have been worse than the wetting. All summer long there were sports of different kinds, such as leaping, dancing, wrestling, shooting, and casting the stone. When winter had come and the flats north of the city were frozen, then there was sliding on the ice, which Fitzstephen describes as follows: "Some, striding as wide as they may, do slide swiftly." Another amusement was for one to take his seat upon a cake of ice "as big as a millstone," while his companions took hold of hands and drew him about. The interesting part of this amusement seemed to be that the "horses" frequently slipped and all tumbled down together. Another sport was evidently a forerunner of skating. Fitzstephen describes it thus: "Some tie bones to their feet and under their heels; and shoving themselves by a little picked staff, do slide as swiftly as a bird flieth in the air, or an arrow out of a cross-bow." One exercise which seems to have been required of the young apprentices was to practice with bucklers and "wasters," or blunt-edged swords, in front of their masters' doors at twilight. The girls were not forgotten, for garlands

were hung across the streets as prizes, and for these the maidens danced to the music of a timbrel, or drum. It is a pity that all the amusements were not as simple and harmless as these; but the cruel and revolting cock fighting as well as bear and bull baiting, that is, muzzling and tying up one of these animals to be attacked by dogs, were not given up even after people became in many respects far more enlightened than during the Middle Ages.

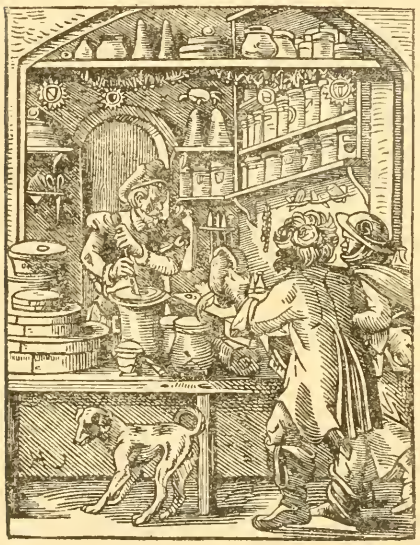
In Smithfield there was held every Friday except on specially holy days a horse-market. Everybody went to it, earls and barons and knights as well as the common citizens. There were horses broken and horses unbroken, there were handsome, graceful amblers, there were steadfast trotters for men at arms, and there were strong, sober steeds for the plough or farm wagon; there were pigs and cows and sheep and oxen. It was quite allowable to keep as many pigs as one chose within the city; but by the fourteenth century the Londoners were beginning to feel that the pigs ought not to be permitted to roam about the streets at pleasure; and the stern decree was passed that whoever kept a pig must feed it at his own house; that is, all pigs must board and lodge at home. Whoever chanced to find one wandering about the streets of the

city, had a right to kill it; and if the owner wished to have the carcass, he must pay fourpence for it. Verily, as honest Fitzstephen declared, London was "a good city indeed" when it had a good master.

CHAPTER XI

MERCHANT GILDS AND CRAFT GILDS

In the Middle Ages there were gilds, or societies, for all purposes. There were gilds to mend the walls and bridges of their home cities and gilds to keep certain roads in good condition. There were gilds of minstrels and gilds of ringers of church bells. Indeed, there were so many varieties of gild that one almost wonders how a man ventured to light his fire in the morning without belonging to a gild for the kindling of hearth fires.



A DRUGGIST

In the towns, as has been said before, almost every citizen had something to do with manufactures and with trade. Perhaps his manufacturing was only making candles in his own home and selling them from his first

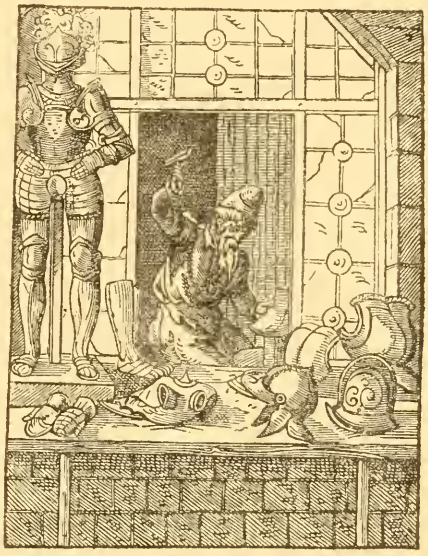
floor; but even then it was an important matter for him to get his wax as cheaply as the other candlemakers of the town. He was interested, too, in having his prices and those of the others of his trade nearly the same; and he did not wish foreigners or even people from other towns to come in and spoil his sales. It was for these reasons that the merchant gilds were formed. Probably in earlier times all or nearly all of the citizens of a town belonged to its merchant gild. The gildsmen called one another brethren, and their rules bound them to work together and help one another as much as possible. The first business, then, of the gild in a town was to look out for the interests of its merchants and tradesmen. It prevented strangers from coming into the town to sell any goods unless they paid tolls; and even then they were allowed to sell only certain things whose sale would not interfere with the interests of the gildsmen. In many places, no foreign merchant was allowed to remain more than forty days, and during this time he must dispose of all his goods. If a gildsman became poor or sick, his gild helped him; if in time of peace he was thrown into prison, his gild came to his aid; at his death, the gild attended his funeral and in many cases paid for masses for the repose of his soul. The member owed various

duties to the gild. He must pay his dues and fines; and in case of a disagreement between him and another member, he must submit to the decision of the gild. He must permit the officers of the gild to examine his goods; and if they found fault with their quality or weight or measure, he must obey the gild's orders and mend his ways.

These merchant gilds often became very wealthy and powerful. They were able to loan large sums of money; and, oddly enough, they sometimes loaned it to themselves. This came about because, although the gildsmen and the citizens were nearly the same people, they were, nevertheless, entirely separate bodies; and when a town wanted to borrow money, it would naturally appeal to the gild first of all. In many cases, a gild even made bargains with the king. It would pay the king the round sum that he demanded from the city in taxation, and then it was entirely free from him in money matters and could collect the amount just as the members thought best.

The merchant gild was of aid to men in manufacturing goods, as has been said; but there were many matters of importance to the manufacturers, or craftsmen, which the merchant gilds did not touch. To begin with, what the plasterers, for instance, wanted was quite dif-

ferent from what the shoemakers wanted, and in a town where many trades were represented, of course no one gild could care for the interests of all. The natural thing, then, was for the men of each craft to form a gild of their own. This was not only a natural, but also an easy and convenient thing to do; for those who practiced the same craft generally lived on the same street, or at any rate, in the same quarter of the town. These newer gilds had two special objects. The first was to see that every member had work. This was brought about by limiting the number of apprentices who were permitted to learn any one trade. The second object was to make sure that every member's work was good. Each craftsman was obliged to allow the gild officers to examine his materials and his work both in the making and after it was finished. No one was allowed to labor



AN ARMORER

on Saturday afternoons, Sundays, or holy days. Working in the night was strictly forbidden. The chief reason probably was that it was difficult to inspect night work, and that with the poor lights then used, few articles could be well made. But there were often other reasons given for refusing to allow it. For instance, in the town of Lincoln, England, the spurriers' gild forbade its members to work longer than from daylight to curfew, "by reason that no man can work so neatly by night as by day." But the decree went on to say furthermore that if the spurriers were allowed to work at night, they would idle about all day and get "drunk and frantic." Then, when night had come, they would blow up their fires and seize their tools; although the fires were a peril to the houses and the noise was a great annoyance to the sick, and so became the cause of many quarrels.

A SPURRIER

Merchant Gilds and Craft Gilds

The craft gilds looked out for the interests of their members in much the same ways as the merchant gilds; that is, they cared for them in illness, attended their funeral services, paid for masses for the repose of their souls, and helped their widows and orphans. It was the business of the gild to settle, if possible, any disputes that might arise between members. Sometimes there were disputes between gilds. The work of each craft was strictly marked off. A man who made shoes must not mend them; and a man whose business it was to mend shoes was not allowed to make them. A man who made hats for his trade was forbidden to make caps. If one craft did any work that another craft claimed as its own, then there was trouble. For instance, a disagreement of this sort arose between the farriers and the blacksmiths of York in England. For many years "ayther craft trubled other." At length, the

A SHOEMAKER

mayor persuaded them to allow the matter to be settled by four men whom he would appoint from other crafts.

Everything was done to induce the members of a gild to treat the other members like brothers, and if any one tried to get the better of the rest in buying material, especially for things necessary to life, like bread, before the others could have the same chance, or by purchasing all that was for sale and then charging a higher price, he was likely to get into trouble with his gild officers.

A BLACKSMITH

Every gild had its feast day once a year or oftener; and every gild had also its patron saint. On the day sacred to him all the members put on the gild livery, or uniform, and marched from their gild hall to the church for services. Another religious duty of the craft gilds was the acting of plays, mystery or miracle plays,

as they were called. Long before the Middle Ages, the priests in various countries often acted stories from the Bible, such as that of the birth of Christ, in order to impress them upon the minds of the people. These were acted in the church, then on platforms in the churchyard. But so many came to see them that the graves were trampled upon, and it was decreed that they should be acted on other ground.

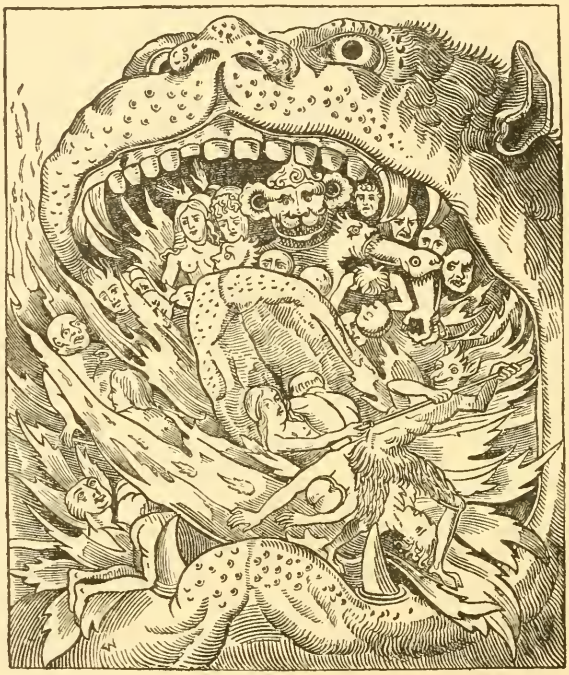
These plays did not always follow the Bible narrative strictly, but added old legends or any incidents that it was thought would interest the people. For instance, in one of the plays of *The Garden of Eden*, when Adam took the apple, he apparently tried to swallow it whole, for the play says that it stuck in his throat, causing the "Adam's apple." In the play of *The Slaughter of the Innocents*, an old tradition is brought in that by mistake Herod's own baby son was slain. In the play of *The Shepherds*, the honest men talk together about how to care for their sheep. They sit down and eat their supper — bread, butter, pudding, "onyans, garlicke, and leickes," green cheese, and a sheep's head soused in oil — "a noble supper," as one of them calls it. After supper, masters and boys are wrestling together when a bright star blazes out. They kneel down and pray to God

to tell them why it is sent. Then the angel Gabriel appears to them and sings, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." This is sung in Latin of course, for it would not have seemed to a writer of the Middle Ages at all respectful to represent an angel as singing in English. The shepherds have a rather hard time with the Latin; but they make out some of the words. They talk about the singing. One of them says of the angel, "He hade a moche better voyce than I have." Then they sing together "a merye songe." The angel appears again and tells them that Christ is born in Bethlehem. After they have gone to find him, the three shepherd boys set out to follow their masters. They wish that they had something to carry to the Child, but they have only the few things that they use themselves. One, therefore, gives the Child his water bottle, which he says is good, only it needs a stopper. The second takes off his own hood for a gift, and the third presents him with a nuthook "to pull down aples, peares, and plumes."

In almost all of these plays there was considerable fun-making and "horse-play." Just as the good folk of the Middle Ages saw no harm in making a pilgrimage a merry and entertaining little journey, so in the

mystery plays they demanded to be amused as well as instructed. In the play of *The Flood*, Noah's wife is indignant that her husband has worked on the ark so many years without telling her. She declares that she will not enter it, and she finally has to be dragged in by Noah and his sons. Herod struts about the stage. He boasts how mighty a king he is and how easily he can destroy the Child who has been born in Bethlehem. Then there must have been loud guffaws of laughter from the audience when the Devil rushed in and carried him off. Satan was the clown, the fun-maker; and whenever he appeared, the people watched eagerly to see him fooled and cheated by some good spirit. He always wore a dress of leather, ending in claws at the fingers and toes. The souls of the good were dazzling in their white coats, while the wicked were robed in black and yellow with sometimes a touch of crimson. When Satan and his evil spirits made their appearance, they came by way of "hell mouth." This was a great pair of gaping jaws made of painted linen and worked by two men. A fire was lighted to look as if hell mouth were full of flame. Some of the items on the old expense accounts are amusing reading. "For the mending of hell mouth," for "keeping up the fire at hell

mouth," sound rather alarming. One item was for a barrel to make an earthquake, another was for a beard for Saint Peter, and yet another for a quart of wine to pay for hiring a gown for the wife of Herod.



HELL MOUTH

Long before the plays became so elaborate as to demand so many "properties," they passed into the hands of the craft gilds. In the early part of the thirteenth century, most of the gilds fixed upon Corpus Christi

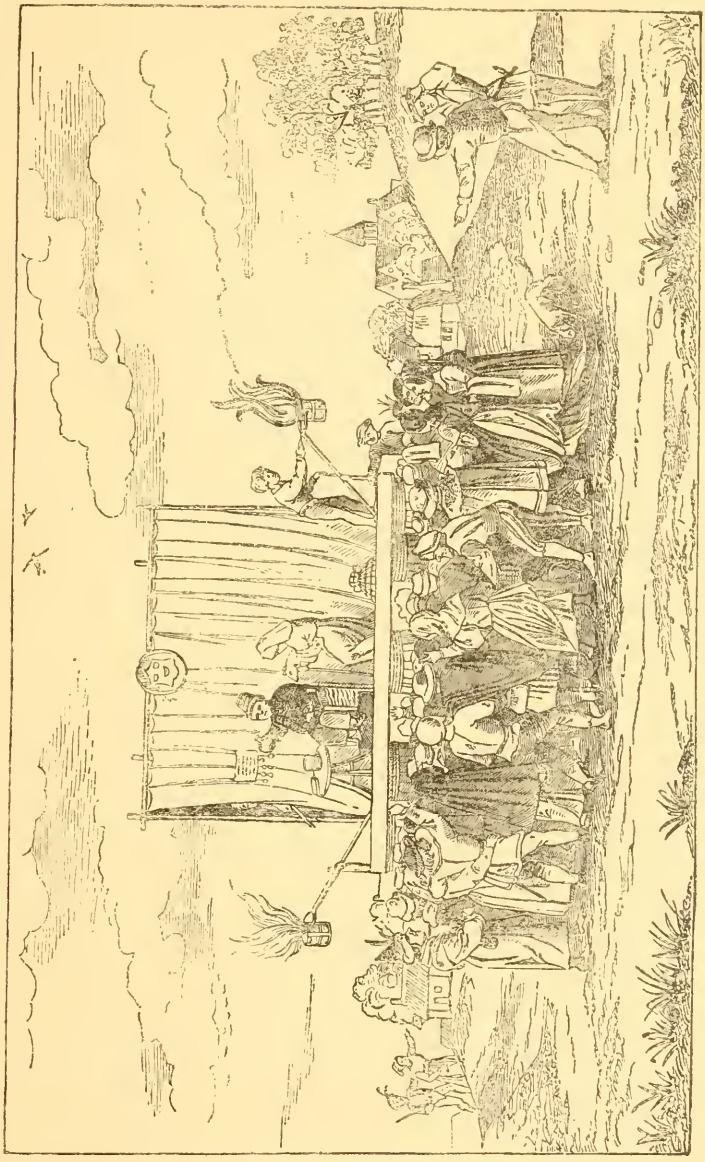
day for their chief celebration. They marched in procession, carrying sacred pictures and images of the saints. Often members of the gild took the parts of Bible characters, and at length whole Bible stories were acted. These were played in pageants, or great lumbering wagons two or three stories high. The lower part was covered by a curtain, and here the actors dressed. The second floor was the stage upon which the acting took place. The third floor, if there was one, represented heaven. An attempt was made to have each scene as realistic as possible; for instance, the stage directions for the play of *The Creation* ordered that as many animals as could be obtained should be suddenly let loose.

Each gild had its own special play. One would play *The Three Kings*, another *The Crucifixion*, another *The Murder of Abel*, and so on. In England they were so arranged that the main stories of the Bible were played in the Bible order, beginning with *The Creation* and ending with *The Last Judgment*. Early in the morning, the ponderous pageants were dragged out to the different streets of the town. Sometimes men of means paid a good price to have them stop in front of their houses. As soon as a play had been acted, each one moved on and acted the same play in another place. This was

usually continued through three days, and a person who remained in one place could see the whole cycle of plays; while if he cared to see any one of them repeated, he had only to follow the pageant to the next street.

The plays were entertaining, and that was reason enough for bringing together a good audience. Moreover, to attend them was thought to be particularly good for one's soul; and to do something religious and be entertained while doing it, was regarded by the good folk of the Middle Ages as a most excellent arrangement.

As for the gilds, at first they looked upon presenting these plays as an honor and also a religious privilege. They chose the actors from their members, and paid them in proportion to the length of their speeches and the amount of stage "business" for which they were responsible. In the play of *St. Peter*, in Coventry, the man who did the crowing was paid fourpence; but when he also attended to the hanging of Judas, he received tenpence more. The gild had to pay these charges, buy costumes and keep them in order, and provide provisions for the actors at rehearsals. It is true that collections were taken up in the streets to help pay expenses, but the burden was still a heavy one. Then,



STAGE OF A SELLER OF DRUGS

too, trades changed with the changing fashions. Sometimes one trade was divided into two. In 1492 the blacksmiths and bladesmiths in a town separated. This resulted in two weak gilds instead of one strong one, and the whole expense of a pageant was a serious tax to each. As time passed, the gilds made strenuous objections to keeping up the plays, but now the law stepped in and in many towns they were required to produce their pageants or else pay a large fine.

As the craft gilds became more numerous and powerful, the merchant gilds lost in power and slowly died away. The craft gilds, too, weakened with changes in methods of manufacture, and most of these also disappeared. In London, a number of gilds still exist; but the procession which takes place whenever a Lord Mayor is to be inducted into office is the last reminder of the old trade pageants.

CHAPTER XII

How Goods were Sold

After a man had manufactured something, shoes or caps or saddles or swords, as the case might be, after his gild had declared that the material was good and that the articles were well made, the next question was how to dispose of them.

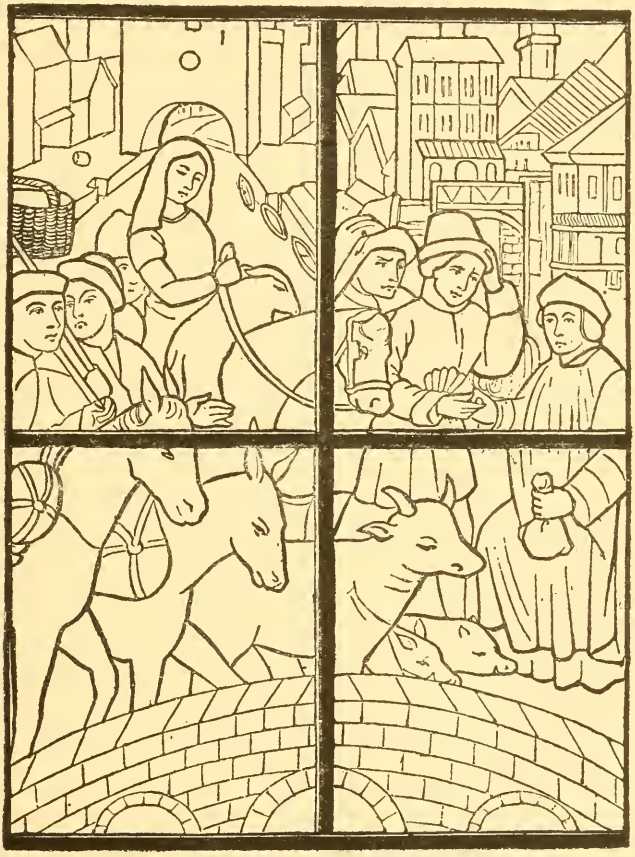
If he lived in a large town, he could sell many goods to the people of the town from the bench in front of his house. As has been said, the people of one craft lived near together; and if any one wanted a sword, for instance, he went to the street of the sword-makers; if he wanted some cloth, he went to the street of the drapers. For bread, he visited the *pestours*, for saddles the *sellers*, and for fish the *pessoners*. If he needed to have a window glazed, he called upon the *verrours*. If he intended to indulge himself in a new suit of clothes, he went to the place of the *talliaunders* to give his order; but if he purposed only to have his old ones repaired, he went to the quarters of the *dubbers*.

Many goods were sold in the country, at castles, cot-

tages, convents, and manor houses, by pedlars who roamed about the land. They packed their merchandise into bundles or boxes and slung them over a horse or a mule. They carried all sorts of articles for a house or a wardrobe, such as caps, hats, girdles, gloves, purses, pewter pots, hoods for men, headdresses for women, and even musical instruments. These pedlars must have been a great convenience to the people who could not come to town; but they did not bear a very good reputation for honesty. There is an old picture that the folk of the time must have enjoyed. It represents a pedlar sound asleep beside a tree, while three monkeys are opening his pack and helping themselves to its contents.

Another opportunity to dispose of goods was at the markets which were held in many towns from one to three times a week. No town could hold a market without the permission of the king. This permission was a valuable gift, for every one wishing to sell in the market had to pay a toll unless he lived in the town. Sometimes the king "gave the market" to an abbey, sometimes to a noble, and sometimes to the town itself. Before a new market could be established, the question had to be considered whether it would be so near some older one as to

lessen its tolls, and so injure the "owner." It was a common feeling that markets should be not more than six



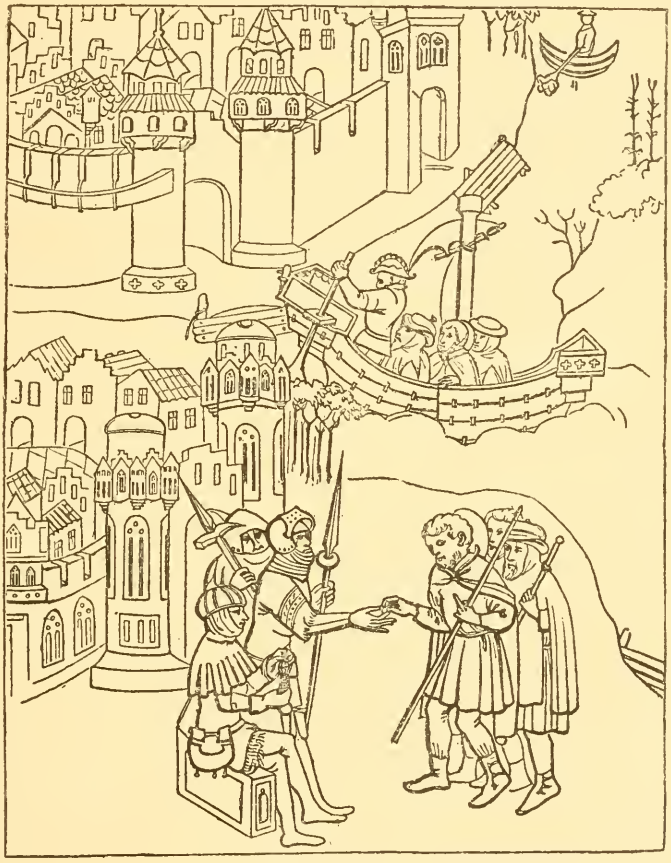
TRADES ENTERING A TOWN
(From a stained-glass window)

miles apart, in order that people might walk there, sell or buy what they wished, and get home before dark.

When market day had come, the good folk from all about came to town and went to the market-place. This was an open space in some central location. Stalls and booths were set up and were rented by some of the dealers; others sat on low stools with baskets of eggs or rolls of butter or live poultry in front of them and waited for customers. In the market-place a cross of wood or stone was usually set up; and often some article belonging to the king, such as a glove, hat, sword, or shield, was put upon it to show to all people that the spot was under the special protection of the sovereign. In some towns on the Continent huge stone figures were reared called Rolands, perhaps from Charlemagne's famous knight of that name. Each Roland bore the sword of justice; and the threat was more than an empty show, for whoever committed any offense during market time had to pay not only the usual penalty, but also a good-sized fine.

Every market had a court of its own to decide the disagreements that are sure to arise where many people are buying and selling. It was composed of merchants, and was called the court of *pie-powder*, or more properly, *pieds-poudrés*, that is, the court of "dusty feet," because when any dispute arose, the disputants came before this court at once, even with their feet dusty from their jour-

ney. Each one told his story, and the matter was promptly settled. This court was held in a hut or booth called a



PAYING TOLL

tollbooth, that is, a booth for collecting tolls. Usually a better building was put up for the court after a while;

and this became the town prison, or perhaps even the town hall.

The tolls were of so many kinds that one wonders how the traders could have made money enough from their sales to pay them all. If a man who was not a citizen of the market town wished to sell fish, for instance, in the market, he must first pay a toll for each load — cart-load, horse-load, or man-load — that he brought in. For the board on which his fish were laid for sale he paid a rent of one farthing a day; and every cart-load on the board was also taxed one penny.

After a while little shops were opened in the towns; but they had only a narrow variety of articles. Most of the towns were so small that it did not pay traders to bring very many goods of a kind or to come long distances even for market days; and those who needed large quantities or articles from other countries fared poorly at the markets. But on one occasion people did gather in great numbers, and that was on pilgrimages. On the special saint's day of any famous shrine, thousands came together. The wideawake merchants were not slow in finding this out, and in bringing goods of all sorts to such places. This was the beginning of the famous fairs that were held in every country in Europe.

How Goods were Sold

For these fairs merchants at first put up simple booths of green branches in the churchyards, and there sold their goods. This was soon forbidden, but they were allowed to establish themselves outside the towns. Fairs soon began to be held at other places than shrines; but it was always necessary to choose a location that could be reached either by good roads or by water-ways.

The right to hold a fair had to be obtained from the king. This was an exceedingly valuable privilege; for of course the tolls were much greater than those received from a market. The king usually gave this right to some favored nobleman, to an abbey, or a hospital. If a town had been burned or had met with any other serious misfortune, their sovereign did not need to draw upon his treasure for a contribution; he simply granted the town a permit to hold a fair. These permits were very definite. They stated not only whether the fair might be held once, twice, three times, or four times a year, but even the number of days that it was allowed to remain open. Another privilege of value was that during fair time the shops in the neighboring towns were ordered to be closed; and if these were market towns, it was forbidden to hold a market until the fair was over. This was not so unjust as it might appear, for the merchants

could bring their goods to the fair and probably make much larger sales than if they had remained in their shops. They had to pay tolls, to be sure, and occasionally a close-fisted trader would avoid the entrance fees by working his way into the fair enclosure much as the bad boy of the storybooks gets under the circus tent. Most people who sold also purchased; and as a general thing, dealers felt that their toll-money was well spent, for at fairs weights and measures were so carefully tested that there was far less chance of being cheated. There was also another protection for the buyer: if he discovered that he had been tricked by some merchant, the laws of the fair held not only the one man, but all the merchants from his home town responsible for the amount; and the goods of any of them could be seized to make the buyer whole.

When a fair was to be held, streets were laid out and lined with wooden or canvas booths. People of one trade were usually on the same street or row; and there were pewterers' row, tailors' row, and others. The day before the fair was to open, officers of the person or hospital or church that owned the fair went about the town declaring its rules. Every merchant must be in his place at a certain time unless he had been delayed

by a storm at sea, by some accident, or by robbers. There was danger of robbers everywhere; for the noble in his castle often demanded "toll" of any merchant who passed near his stronghold. This really meant that the noble and his followers dashed out upon any merchant who was so unfortunate as to be obliged to go by his castle. The merchant lost his goods and counted himself in luck if he did not lose his life. The officers also announced that disagreements would be settled by the court of pieds-poudrés, and that nothing could be sold within several miles of the fair, but whoever had anything to dispose of must bring it within the gates. They proclaimed how strong the wine and ale must be and how much the loaves of bread must weigh. These officers tested the weights and measures. If any false ones were discovered, they were burned, and the owners were obliged to pay fines.

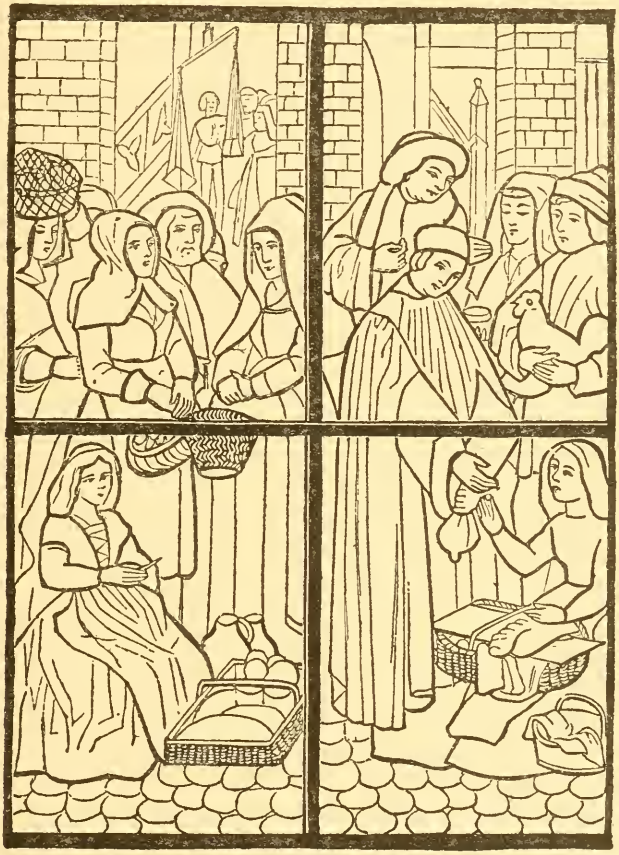
It was forbidden to make any sale until the fair was opened; but when the hour had come, a trumpet was blown as a signal, and trade began at once. There were swarms of people from town and country. There were merchants from distant lands, there were knights and ladies and peasants, there were jesters and jugglers and minstrels. Stewards of large abbeys were there to lay in

a year's supply of salt, spices, wine, fur, and linen; and humbler folk were there to buy the few little dainties that would be their only luxuries for the year to come. Iron goods, tar, gold, cattle, horses, wool, hides, cloth, velvets, ribbons, silks, satins, hay, grain, glass, copper, flax, salt fish, wax, tallow, honey, oil, resin, pitch, timber, armor — these were only a few of the articles that were for sale. There were, too, so many kinds of amusements that every one could find entertainment. Jugglers did their sleight-of-hand tricks; minstrels chanted romances; trained bears went through their performances; cheap jacks sold their quack medicines; wrestlers showed their strength and skill; and dancers balanced themselves on their hands rather than their feet.

Fairs were not only a great convenience for buyers and sellers, but they were a help in keeping prices steady. Small quantities of goods brought into a town would often command a high price, because there might not be enough for all that wanted them; but if the people knew that in a short time the same sort of goods would be for sale at a fair near at hand and at a reasonable cost, they would wait, if possible. This would lessen the demand for the goods, and only a fair price could be obtained.

How Goods were Sold

Fairs were held, as has been said, throughout Europe. The journeys of the crusaders had shown what comforts



A MARKET SCENE
(From a stained-glass window)

and luxuries there were in the world. People had developed new tastes and they made new demands. They

would have thought themselves ill-treated indeed if they had had to depend upon a town market to supply their wants. In England, the largest fair was that of Stourbridge, near Cambridge. Its streets and booths were spread over an area half a mile square. Some of these streets were named for the trades represented and others for the nations represented. Stourbridge fair lasted a month, and during this time there were immense sales of both English and foreign productions. Two seaports specially liked by merchants on the Continent were near Stourbridge, and vessels came in by scores loaded with foreign goods. Italy sent silks and velvets and glass of her own manufacture, and also cotton, spices, and manufactured articles from the East. From France and Spain came quantities of wine. Flemish ships brought fine linen and woolen cloth. The Hanseatic League, or union of German towns that ruled the commerce of northern Europe, brought many products of the north, such as iron, copper, timber, salt fish, and meat, furs, grain, amber, dried herring, resin, and pitch. As time passed, the business of the League spread to the south and west, and then this great mercantile union brought wine and oil and salt from France and Spain and Portugal. At Stourbridge the League merchants bought barley for the

breweries of Flanders, together with large numbers of horses and cattle. Most of all, however, they wanted wool to sell to the various towns where it was to be woven into cloth. England raised such vast quantities of wool that its sale brought in large amounts of money. It was looked upon as an important source of the country's wealth, and to this day when the Lord Chancellor enters the House of Lords, he takes his seat upon a large square bag of wool covered with red cloth.

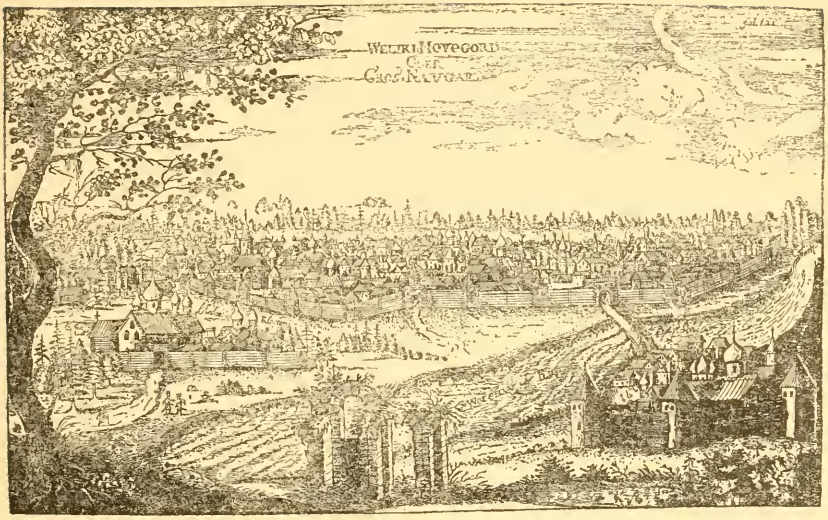
Another famous English fair was held at Winchester. This dates from the time of William the Conqueror. He allowed the Bishop of Winchester to hold it for one day in the year; but William's greatgrandson, Henry II, allowed it to be held for sixteen days. Whoever traveled on a road leading to the fair or crossed a bridge had to pay toll. The fair was a valuable bit of property in those days; but its chief dependence was upon the sale of wool. This sale gradually passed to the eastern ports, and the fair dwindled away.

Often fairs became noted for the sale of some one thing. People in England who wanted to buy geese went to Nottingham; those who wanted to enjoy every kind of amusement that was dear to the folk of the time could hardly wait for the opening of the Greenwich

fair. Probably no one ever made a long journey to Birmingham expressly to buy gingerbread and onions; but those were certainly the two articles that had won fame for the Birmingham fair. At Smithfield, where the Londoners went for their sports, St. Bartholomew's fair was held. This was famous for some time for wool and cloth. Later, the chief sales were of wool and cattle. Gradually the character of the fair changed, and it became simply a place for wild and rollicking amusements.

It is only seventy years since Saint Bartholomew's fair was given up; and some of the great fairs have continued to this day. There is one at Beaucaire in France seven hundred years old, where all sorts of rare merchandise may still be found. The fair of Leipsic in Germany is even older. It has a most excellent location, because it is so central that it can be easily reached from any part of Europe. It is still held, and is well known for its sales of books.

The most famous fair that is still in existence is that of Nijni-Novgorod, or Lower Novgorod, in Russia. This began, no one knows when, in an old custom of Russian merchants and merchants from the East meeting on the Volga River to exchange goods. The place of meeting moved from one site to another, and

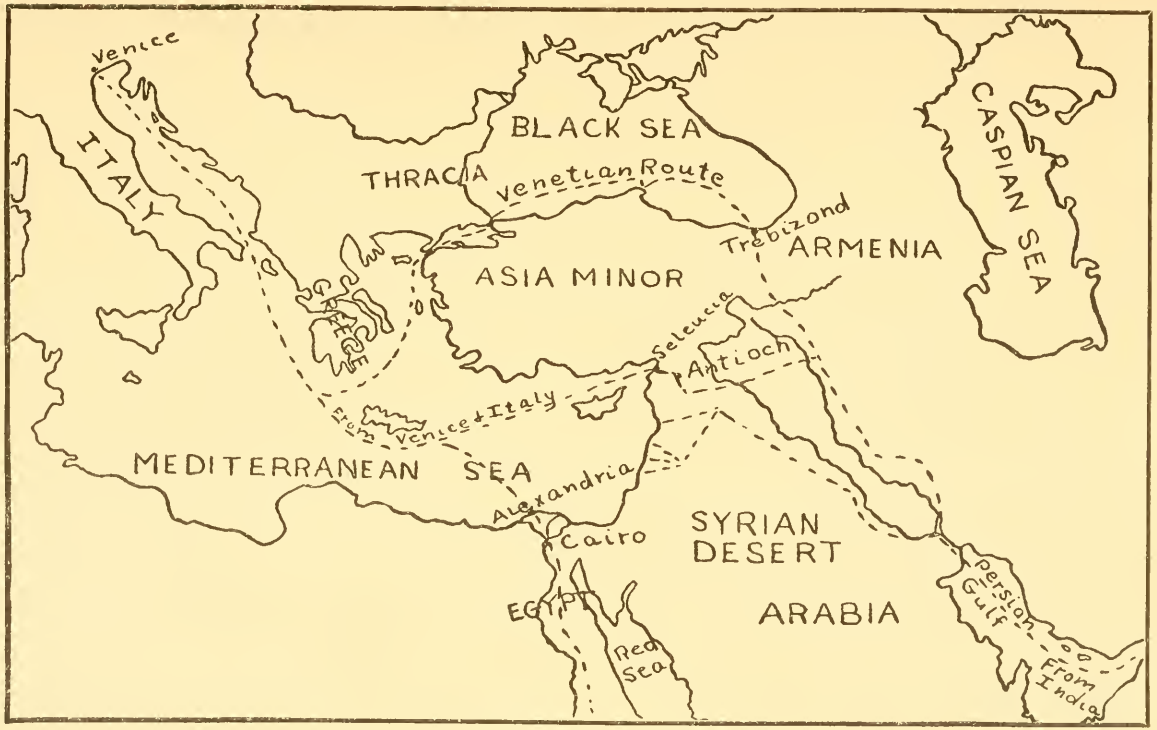


NOVGOROD

about one hundred years ago it was permanently settled at Nijni-Novgorod. When the time of the fair draws near, the Volga River swarms with boats, and the quays for ten miles along the river front are heaped up with goods, protected as best they may be by sheds until they can be removed to the shops made ready for them. There are about six thousand of these shops, most of them built of stone. To this fair Asia sends tea, cotton, silk, madder, and various manufactured wares, made chiefly of leather. Western Europe sends groceries, wines, and manufactured articles. Russia herself pro-

vides four-fifths of the goods sold; and she makes a fine display of iron, grain, salt, furs, and pottery. The fair continues for a month. It is estimated that the value of the goods sold there each year now amounts to about three hundred million dollars.

An enormous quantity of merchandise was carried over Europe every year, and always by water whenever there was a convenient river or sea. In the thirteenth century goods from India were brought up the Persian Gulf and the Tigris River until the point nearest to Antioch and Seleucia was reached. Some merchants then went directly to these cities, and there put their goods on board Venetian vessels. Others went from the Tigris northward to Trebizond on the Black Sea by caravans. At Trebizond they met Venetian vessels, and the spices, silks, cottons, oils, sugar, gums, and precious stones of the East were carried through the Black Sea, the sea of Marmora, around Greece, into the Adriatic Sea, and then to Venice. A third route was to go by water from India to Aden, at the southeast end of the Red Sea, make a nine-days' journey to the Nile, down the Nile to Cairo, through a canal to Alexandria, and there transfer the cargo to Venetian vessels. It was chiefly through this trade that Venice and, a little later,



TRADE ROUTES FROM THE EAST TO VENICE

Genoa, became wealthy and powerful; but in 1497 three small vessels set sail from Portugal to make a long voyage. When they returned, they had rounded Africa and so had discovered a new route to India and the East. The people of the East were no longer obliged to send their goods to Europe by wearisome and dangerous caravan journeys; they could load them upon ships and dispatch them directly to Portugal. The power of Venice grew less. Genoa was forced to yield to Milan, which, like Florence, had won wealth and fame by its manufactures.

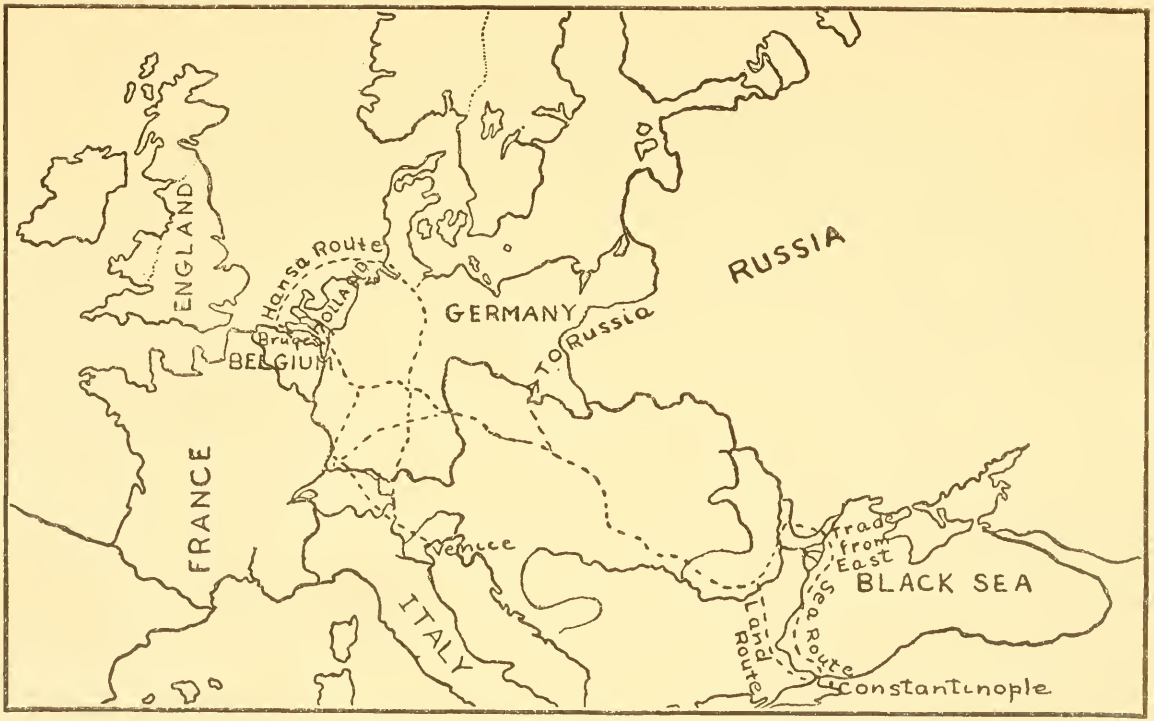
So it was that goods were brought from the East to Europe. The traders who carried them from southern to northern Europe must have been glad that there were two such rivers as the Danube and the Rhine; for they could load their vessels on the Black Sea and float them up the Danube and the Waag, if they were going to Russia; or they could continue up the Danube as far as it was navigable, go by land to the Rhine River, and then down the Rhine to "the quaint old Flemish city" of Bruges. They could also go northwest from Venice to the Rhine if they wished, and then to Bruges, which was for a long while the centre of commerce in the north. Many Venetian merchants were accustomed to

go all the way by sea, passing through the Straits of Gibraltar and up the coasts of Portugal and France to Flanders.

At a time when no one seemed to think it possible to do any special thing unless he was a member of a society for doing that thing, of course all this buying and selling was carried on in great degree, not by individuals, but by companies of merchants. This was far more than a mere custom. Traders usually had to make long stays in the countries where they went to sell goods. It was often next to impossible for a foreigner to obtain justice, if any disagreement arose between him and a native; but many merchants united in a strong company could win not only justice, but valuable privileges of trade. One of the most important of these associations in England was known as the "Merchants of the Staple." The articles exported from England in largest quantities, such as wool, tin, and lead, were called staples. In order to make sure of collecting the duty on them, laws were made forbidding any one to export these things from any other place in England except the ten "staple towns," Newcastle, York, Lincoln, Norwich, Westminster, Canterbury, Chichester, Winchester, Exeter, and Bristol. The staple goods were taken to these towns to

be weighed and taxed, and then they might be shipped to other countries. Wool was the most important staple, for until the middle of the fourteenth century, the English wove only coarse, heavy cloth, and imported their fine cloth, chiefly from the Netherlands. Some town in the Netherlands was chosen as a "foreign staple," and there the English goods must be carried before they could be sold. The plans of the government, however, for staples were very uncertain. Just as merchants became well accustomed to one foreign staple town, another one was chosen. Then it was decided to remove the staple to England, then to the Netherlands again; and more than once the whole plan of staples was given up for a time, and merchants were free to carry what they liked wherever they chose to take it.

Traders who imported or exported goods in their own vessels were called "adventurers," and in England there was a famous association called the "Merchants Adventurers." Fine weaving had at length been introduced into England, and the exports which they carried from England to the Netherlands were chiefly cloth. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the "Adventurers" were great folk indeed, with their governor and twenty-four assistant governors, their great wealth, and also their



TRADE ROUTES FROM THE SOUTH TO THE NORTH OF EUROPE

brand-new charter and their coat of arms, both granted to them by the king.

There was one company, however, far greater and more famous than all the others. This was the Hanseatic League which has already been mentioned. "Hanse" or "hansa" is a word of several meanings. It seems to have signified in the first place a society; then the fee paid for entrance into a trading gild; then a company of merchants trading away from home. The Hanseatic League was a union of seventy or eighty cities in northern Germany. It aimed not only at commerce, but at making it safe to travel among these towns and also by sea. In those days piracy was looked upon as being disagreeable, indeed, for any vessel that was captured and robbed, but it was, nevertheless, a perfectly respectable calling. The German Ocean and the Baltic Sea were overrun by a gang of pirates, one of whose leaders was a nobleman named Stortebeker. The League sent out its vessels in pursuit, captured the leaders and one hundred and fifty men. Even if piracy was regarded as respectable, the pirate who was caught was adjudged to deserve death, and this nobleman was doomed to be hanged with his companions. "Let me go free," he said, "and I will give you a chain of pure gold long enough to go around

the cathedral and the town." This request was refused; but his second wish was granted, namely, that he and his comrades might dress themselves in their best and march to the place of execution to the music of drum and fife.

The Hanseatic League aimed at monopolizing the trade of the greater part of Europe. It grew stronger and stronger. Sometimes the members bought trade privileges, and sometimes they fought for them. They established "factories," or trading stations, in as many countries as possible. Bergen in Norway was one of their chief stations. They paid no taxes, and obliged the people to send to Bergen all the productions of the land that were for sale. There the Hansards selected what was of most value before any sales could be made elsewhere. About three thousand members of the League lived in the factory at Bergen. They were forbidden to marry or to spend a single night out of bounds. The young men and boys were treated with the utmost severity. Every newcomer had to undergo tortures, one of the mildest of which was to be flogged till the blood came. If he survived, the possibility lay before him of rising to a high position and gaining great wealth. The trade of Denmark and Sweden was in the hands of the League. In Russia it was for many

years so powerful that it was able to forbid the Russian merchants to trade on the sea. The members established themselves at Novgorod; and at length became strong enough to oblige the Russians to obey whatever laws they chose to make. For instance, if a Russian merchant failed, the League decreed that he must pay in full whatever he might owe the Germans before he was allowed to pay the smallest debt to his countrymen. In the Netherlands the Hansards founded a factory at Bruges. Here they obliged every passing vessel, save those going to England or the Baltic coast, to halt at the port of Bruges, pay toll, and allow them to select from the cargo whatever they chose to buy. In France, Spain, Portugal, and Venice, they carried on trade; but not so widely as in the northern countries.

In England the power of the League was greatest. The English called its members Easterlings, because their land lay to the east of England. The German money was often spoken of as Easterling, or sterling money. It was with this sterling money that the Hansards bought their way to the favor of the English sovereigns. More than once, when an English king was in need of gold, the League helped him out of his difficulties, and in return graciously accepted trade privileges

worth far more than the loans that they had made. The people of England were not always pleased to have these favors shown to foreigners, and during the Wat Tyler rebellion in the latter part of the thirteenth century, they made a fierce attack upon the Germans. "Say 'bread and cheese,'" they would command every one who was suspected of being a foreigner. If he pronounced the words with a trace of the German accent, he was struck down on the instant. It was easy, however, for the Hansards to get their revenge. All that they had to do was to tax the English heavily at Bruges or Bergen, or to refuse to allow their vessels to enter the Baltic Sea or to stop at any port of Iceland or Greenland. In the latter part of the fifteenth century, however, both Hansards and English had been playing pirate, and at length a treaty was actually made between them with as many formalities as if this trading company had been another nation.

The headquarters of the League in England were a settlement in London known as the Steelyard, probably because here stood the great scales called by that name. This was a city within a city. Its buildings stretched up from the river front, so that the merchandise of the League could be unloaded at its own wharves. Here

stood the great hall, a handsome stone building which was used for business meetings and also for a dining room. A strong tower protected the treasures of the company. Not far away was a garden with trees and vines. There were also tables and seats; for the garden became a favorite resort for both Hansards and Londoners, who went there summer evenings to drink Rhenish wine and eat the salmon, caviar, and neat's tongue for which it was famous.

Life in the Steelyard was far from being all play, however, for there was plenty of work for everybody and the rules of the place were exceedingly strict. No one was allowed to marry so long as he remained at the settlement. Playing at dice even in one's own room and entertaining any person not a member of the League were punished by heavy fines. If a man fenced or played tennis with an Englishman, he was fined twenty shillings. If two men indulged in a fight with either fists or knives, they needed to have long purses, for the fine was one hundred shillings. Every evening, promptly at nine o'clock, the door of each dwelling was shut and locked and the key given to one of the officers.

In Norway the Hansards behaved with a high hand, demanding whatever they desired and forcing the help-

less folk of Bergen to do as they were bidden. In England the German merchants were no less bent upon having their own way; but as far as possible, they

TRANSPORTING MERCHANDISE

bought privileges rather than demanded them. They made liberal gifts, but usually in directions where they would "do the most good." The Lord Mayor of London received from them a generous present each year.

The English alderman whose business it was to settle any disputes that might arise between English and Germans was more than willing to accept from the League its annual gift of fifteen gold coins worth about one hundred shillings, wrapped in a pair of gloves. The Inspector of Customs fared even better, for once a year a friendly windfall of about four hundred shillings delighted his heart.

In spite of lavish gifts to those in power and of princely loans to English sovereigns, the Steelyard had to be prepared at all times to defend itself against a London mob, and as a safeguard a high stone wall was built to shut in the settlement from the rest of the city. Every merchant was required to keep in his room a suit of armor and a supply of arms in order to be prepared for any possible uprising.

As English merchants grew stronger, their jealousy of the League increased. The attacks of the mob upon the Steelyard became more frequent, and at length, near the end of the sixteenth century, its charter was taken away. The later history of the League in other countries was much the same. The Hanseatic merchants were so successful that the merchants of other lands sought earnestly for the same success; and as soon as the

different cities and countries became rich and powerful enough to manage their own trade, the League weakened and came to its end. The free cities, Hamburg and Bremen, were the last to yield; but in 1888 these two gave up their independence and joined the German Empire.

If we judge the Hanseatic League by present standards, its methods seem cruel and despotic; but it is a long way from the thirteenth century to the twentieth; and many things are frowned upon now that were regarded as entirely right and proper seven hundred years ago. Remembering this, we can appreciate the fact that the record of the League should be looked upon as a noble one. It aided the development of industry, it spread civilization, it created the commerce of northern Europe, and it trained merchants and magistrates and sea-captains. In the cities of the League there was courage and independence, there was industry and enterprise; better still, there was an ever increasing appreciation of order and of peace.

CHAPTER XIII

Schools and Literature

The schools of the Middle Ages were quite unlike those of to-day. They are interesting to read about, but they can hardly have been interesting to the pupils; for the poor children were treated with the utmost severity. It was the general belief that Satan was in them and that nothing but frequent whippings would drive him out. Even in their own homes, the troubles of children were many; for instance, on the twenty-eighth of every December, Holy Innocents Day, they were flogged in their beds that they might remember Herod's murder of the babies of Bethlehem. In many schools boys were flogged at regular intervals, whether they had been good or bad. In some places, even as late as the fourteenth century, a man who had been chosen schoolmaster was given a ferule, a rod, and a boy, and was required to show in public how well he could administer a flogging.

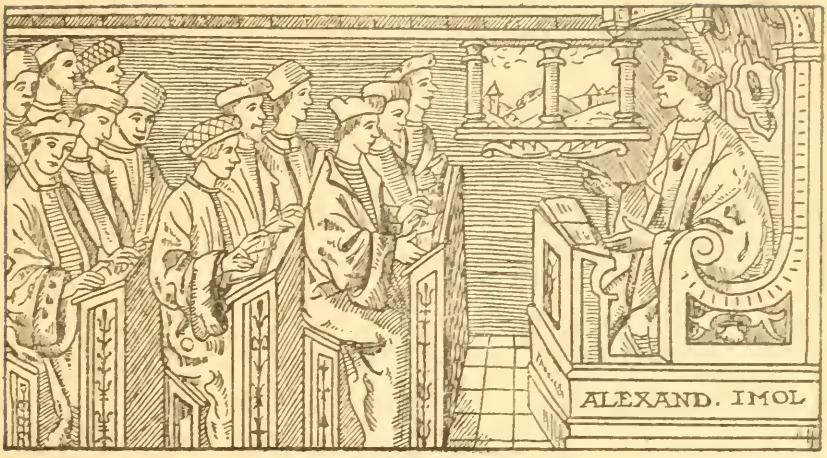
Between 500 and 1100 the clergy were the only schoolmasters. Sometimes the parish priest of a village or town carried on an elementary school. There were also

cathedral schools in charge of the bishops of various dioceses; but by far the larger number were connected with monasteries. In the earlier part of the Middle Ages, from the sixth century to the middle of the eighth, the monastery schools of Ireland and of England were by far the best. Three or four centuries after the days of Saint Patrick, Ireland was known as "the island of saints and scholars," and was the most learned country in Europe. The pupils built tiny huts near the schools, and in these a rich scholar and a poor often lived together, the poor serving the rich for his food and clothes. There were no prizes, and tuition was free to all who could not afford to pay. Most of the studying and reciting was done in the open air. Latin was the book language of the time, and was used in teaching as soon as pupils could understand it; but in the Irish schools Gaelic and Greek were also studied. One who had completed the course in school and university and become an "ollave," or doctor of philosophy, was expected to be able to compose verses extempore on any subject. He must know seven hundred and fifty historical tales and be ready to recite any that were called for at feasts. The greatest respect was paid to the ollave. He sat next to the chief or king. For his support "twenty-one cows and their

grass" were given him. When he went on a journey, he had the right to an escort of twenty-four tutors, advanced pupils, and servants. It was looked upon as so great an honor to entertain him and his retinue that no one below a certain rank was permitted to have this privilege. If in the teacher's old age even his "twenty-one cows and their grass" did not keep him from poverty, his former pupils were expected to care for him; and this was always done with reverence and tenderness.

In England, one of the most famous schools was at the monastery of Jarrow, where six hundred monks besides many strangers and no one knows how many boys studied. The chief teacher was Bæda, or the Venerable Bede, the first English scholar. He loved the out-of-door work that was required of the monks, the care of the garden, the sheep, and the young calves; but he loved his books and his pupils. "I don't want my boys to read a lie," he said, and he translated for them the Gospel of Saint John and made for their textbooks collections of all that was then known of science and grammar and rhetoric.

During the reign of Charlemagne, at some time between 780 and 800, the various monasteries wrote to him that within their walls prayers would be offered



INTERIOR OF A SCHOOL

for him. He thanked the monks most cordially, but told them plainly that the language of their letters was rude and illiterate and bade them begin to study. He founded schools, and he kept watch of them. Once at least he examined a number of the boys' exercises. He found that the poor boys had done far better than the rich. He praised the poor boys most warmly, and then gave a severe lecture to the wealthy ones. He told them that their birth and riches would count for nothing at all with him, and that if they hoped for his favor, they must go to work.

Charlemagne set these idle pupils a good example, for he himself was a student. He tried his best to learn

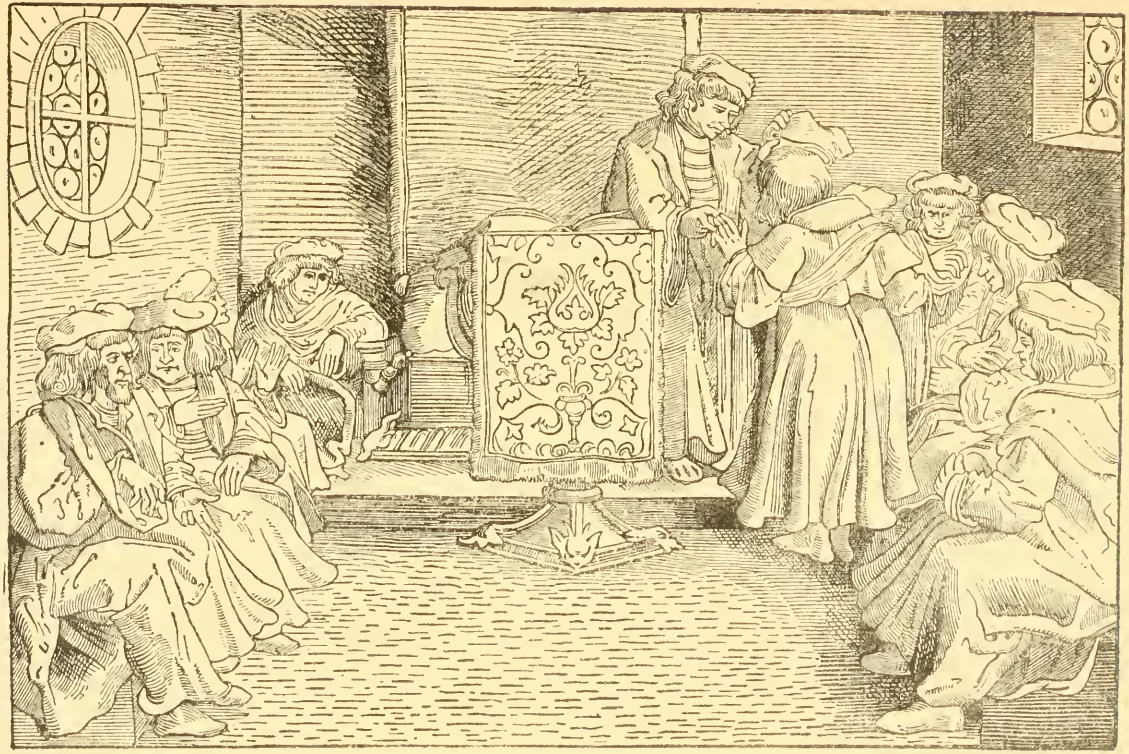
to write; and under his pillow he kept tablets for practising; but his great hand was accustomed to wielding a mighty sword rather than a slender pen, and he never succeeded. He was deeply interested in astronomy, and he had a fair knowledge of Greek. Latin he is said to have spoken as readily as German. It had long been a custom to carry on a school at the Frankish court; but the palace school took on new life under the care of Charlemagne, for he himself was its most eager member. The pupils were the family of the king and the courtiers. For the older folk, the school was a sort of club which met to discuss literary and scientific questions. The members dropped their real names and took others. Charlemagne chose David, others chose Samuel, Homer, etc. One name, Witto, meaning *white*, was changed to the Latin form, *Candidus;* Arno, meaning *eagle*, became in the same way *Aquila*. The master of the school, the learned Alcuin, had formerly been at the head of the monastery school of York. He wrote textbooks for his royal pupils. For the king's son Pepin, a boy of sixteen, he prepared a list of questions and answers. These are rather poetical than scientific. One question is, "What is frost?" and the answer is, "A persecutor of plants, a destroyer of leaves, a fetter of the earth, a fountain of

water." Some of the questions are hardly more than puzzles or riddles. One is, "What is wonderful?" No one would ever guess the answer, for it is, "I lately saw a man stand and a dead man walk who never existed." The explanation follows, that the object seen was a reflection in the water. The king was so eager to bring educated men around him that when he was told of the learning of Saint Augustine and Saint Jerome, he exclaimed, "Why cannot I have twelve such men as these?" "What!" cried Alcuin, "The Lord of heaven and earth had but two such, and wouldst thou have twelve?"

In England monasteries and libraries had been destroyed by the Danes, and when Alfred came to the throne in 971, there was not one priest south of the river Thames, the most enlightened part of England, who could translate a page of Latin into English. It was many years before Alfred could win quiet for his land; but when peace had been made, he built monasteries and sent for learned men, his favorite among them being the Welsh priest Asser. Both Alfred and Charlemagne realized that people ought to be able to read their own language, even if it was not so polished as the Latin; and Alfred decreed that all the free young folk of the

kingdom should learn to read English, and that only those who could give more time to study should learn Latin. There were very few English books, and the busy man with a kingdom on his hands set to work to translate those that he thought best adapted to the needs of his people. One was a sort of history and geography, written by a Spaniard called Orosius. Alfred made many additions of his own; and there is no doubt that they were needed, for the book was already five hundred years old.

This book by Orosius was used as a textbook in Europe for many centuries. Other favorites were the writings of Bede and the *Doctrinale* of one Alexander Dolensis. This was a textbook of grammar and was used for some three or four hundred years. The Latin Psalter was perhaps the most common textbook. As soon as boys had learned the alphabet and could read a little, they were promoted to the Psalter. They went over this so often that many of them could say it by heart, often without knowing its meaning. They learned to write with a stylus on waxed tablets; then they were allowed to use quills and ink and write on parchment. They were taught to sing the Church service. In Latin they studied the declensions and conjugations and long



STUDENTS AT A UNIVERSITY

lists of words, and they also learned Latin conversation books by heart.

As soon as boys had completed this elementary work, they began on the *trivium*, or three-fold way. This was grammar, rhetoric, and logic. In grammar they had to learn long lists of answers to questions; they copied the fables of Æsop besides many proverbs and maxims; they read Virgil and some of the Christian poets. In rhetoric they studied the works of Cicero and Quintilian.

At the end of the trivium came the *quadrivium*, or the four-fold way. This included music, arithmetic, geometry, and what was known of the sciences. Even the most elementary arithmetic was no easy study, for until the Arabic numerals were introduced, the Roman notation was used. In speaking, numbers were often indicated by motions. To place the left hand on the breast meant 10,000. To fold both hands, 100,000. In business, the abacus was sometimes employed, an instrument made by stringing beads on wires, the first wire indicating units, the second tens, and so on. Sometimes a board was marked off into spaces, and the numbers were expressed by pebbles. The number 2451, for instance, would be represented as ..|....|.....|. Among the studies of the quadrivium, astronomy was especially

important because the time of the Church festivals was reckoned by that science. There were so few textbooks that as a general thing the teacher dictated and the pupils wrote. Then they learned by heart what they had written, and were soundly whipped if they made mistakes. Girls were taught in convents by the nuns. They learned to embroider, to care for a house, to follow the services of the Church and obey her rules, and also to read and write to some degree. All learning centred in the Church. The monks and clergy were the teachers, and the first object of their teaching was to train boys for her various offices. No boy was shut out of her schools because of poverty. Those who declared that they meant to become monks, the *oblati*, were taught and fed free of charge; the others, the *externes*, paid nothing for tuition; and if they could not afford to pay for food, it was given them by the convent.

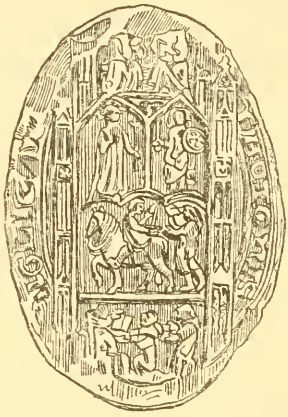
During the tenth and eleventh centuries especially there was great interest in chivalry, in the deeds that a man could do with his own right arm, in individuality. The towns increased in number and size. The crusades gave people broader ideas of the world. In Spain, the Saracens were searching for the philosopher's stone that should turn into gold whatever it touched; and for the

wonderful elixir that should give a man youth and life for as long as he chose. They were using the Arabic, or probably more correctly, the Hindu numerals; and this alone opened a new world for mathematics. By all these means the people of Europe were aroused and made eager to learn something new. The result of this desire was the founding of numerous universities in the twelfth century.

The modern way of founding a university is to raise money, obtain a charter, buy land, and put up some buildings; but the method of the twelfth century was quite different. Indeed, in those times a university grew rather than was founded. Any learned man who believed that he had something to say about a favorite subject could settle himself near some school and give lectures to as many as cared to listen to him. Other learned men followed him and lectured on other subjects. In short, at first anybody lectured and anybody listened; and the lecturer who could bring together the greatest number of students received the most money in fees. After a while, men were obliged to secure a license before being permitted to teach.

The students were not regarded as citizens of the town in which the university was situated, and therefore

in order to protect themselves, those who spoke the same language united in one association, or "nation." Naturally, they tried to lodge in the same part of the city, and sometimes they even built lodgings for themselves. At five or six o'clock in the morning, the students in Paris thronged to the lecture hall, and sat down on the floor on the straw or hay with which it was strewn. They took notes on waxed tablets for several hours. Some of them then hurried home to copy their notes; others met in a meadow playground for wrestling, ball-playing, running, jumping, or swimming in the river Seine. Sometimes the different nations carried on a rough-and-tumble warfare with one another. Sometimes they fought with the townsfolk. The town could do nothing to control them, for the university had no buildings and no apparatus; and if they chose, teachers and pupils could simply put on their hats, take up their handful of books, and go elsewhere, leaving the merchants of the town to mourn over their loss of several thousand customers.



SEAL OF ENGLISH "NATION"

As a general thing, each university became specially excellent in some one branch. The university at Paris, for instance, was famed for its teaching of theology; that of Salerno for its instruction in medicine, and that of Bologna in law. Students wandered from one to another, learning "in no place decent manners," said a monk indignantly. Many who were poor begged their food as they journeyed, often singing their petitions. One of these songs begins: —

I, a wandering student lad,
Born for toil and sadness,
Oftentimes am driven by
Poverty to madness.

Literature and knowledge I
Fain would still be earning,
Were it not that want of pelf
Makes me cease from learning.

He then rehearses his many needs and begs: —

Take a mind unto thee now
Like unto Saint Martin's;
Clothe the pilgrim's nakedness,
Wish him well at parting.

So may God translate your soul
Into peace eternal,

And the bliss of saints be yours
In His realm supernal.[1]

A great deal of writing was done by these learned folk; but the larger part of it was about philosophy and theology. Much of the most interesting literary work of the Middle Ages came from the common folk, and was in the first place stories and legends recited by one person to another or songs that were chanted at feasts and merrymakings. If in any country there was a brave man who was greatly admired by the people, of course the accounts of his mighty deeds were told and retold; and there is small doubt that they grew a little more marvelous at each telling. Often they were put into verse. No one who repeated them cared in the least whether he gave them correctly or not; and each added or altered to suit his taste. By and by some one welded the ballads together into a heroic poem with a beginning and an ending.

The old Saxon, or early English, poem of *Beowulf* is thought to have grown up in this way from the songs sung by the harpers before the Saxons left the Continent to come to Britain. It is the story of a brave young hero from whom the poem takes its name. He kills a hor-

[1] Translated by J. A. Symonds.

rible monster named Grendel who stalks up from the fens in the misty twilight and devours the thanes, or followers, of the aged chief Hrothgar. Grendel's mother is as terrible as he; but Beowulf dives down to the depths of the lake and kills her in her cavern. Hrothgar's men stand on the cliff, gazing at the bloodstained water. They fear that they will never again see the bold champion; but at last he comes to the surface. Then there is feasting and rejoicing, and Beowulf goes home to his people loaded with gifts from the grateful Hrothgar. He is afterwards slain in a contest with a fire-breathing dragon.

The *Nibelungenlied*, or song of the Nibelungs, comes from Germany in one form and from Scandinavia in another. In the German version of the story, the haughty and athletic maiden Brunhild declares that she will marry no one who cannot in three contests prove himself stronger than she. Siegfried, the hero, puts on a magic cap which makes him invisible, and then by his help her suitor Günther, king of Burgundy, wins his bride. Siegfried's reward is the hand of Günther's sister, the beautiful Kriemhild. They live happily together in the Netherlands, enjoying the "Rhine gold," or "Nibelungen Treasure," which he had seized from the sons of

the king of the Nibelungs. But the two women quarreled, and Kriemhild let out the secret of the invisible cap and the victory of Günther in the contest. Then Brunhild plotted revenge. She learned that Siegfried could be slain in one way only, that is, by piercing a certain spot between his shoulders, and she induced Kriemhild's uncle, Hagen, to kill him as he knelt by a brook to drink. After years of grieving, Kriemhild married Etzel, or Attila, on condition that he would avenge the death of Siegfried. When a fitting time had come, Attila invited the Burgundians to visit his court, and there they were massacred by the Huns at the bidding of Kriemhild. She slew Hagen with her own hand; but one of Attila's knights struck her down, and she fell dead by the side of Siegfried's murderer. The treasure of the Nibelungs had been stolen from her and sunk in the river Rhine by Hagen; and, if the tale is true, there it still lies hidden.

The *Cid* comes from Spain. It is a poem about a real person, one Rodrigo Diaz, who won the title of El Cid, or my lord, by overcoming five Moorish kings. The Cid was the hero of many of the feats that the folk of the twelfth century counted valorous. He killed the enemy of his father and galloped home with the bloody head

of the foe hanging from his horse's collar. He drove away the invaders of Spain, and he captured cities; but his greatest exploit of all took place after his death. Without him the Spaniards could not expel the Moors; but they well knew that the terror of his name would do more than all the arms of Castile and Leon. They took the dead body of their leader, dressed it in battle array, with a sword in the cold hand, with a coat of mail, a shield, a helmet, and a lance, mounted it on Banièca, their lord's favorite war horse, set it at the head of the line, and then went forth to battle, with the dead rider at their head. The enemy fled before them; and after the victories had been won, they laid the body reverently in a tomb in Castile. When the good horse Banieca came to his end, he was buried under the trees before the door of the tomb. To this day the memory of the Cid is so dear to the Spaniards that to swear "by the faith of Rodrigo" is the strongest vow of loyalty that they can make.

The most delightful old romances of knighthood are about Charlemagne of Germany and Arthur of Britain and their knights. Twelve of Charlemagne's followers were so equal in bravery that they were known as Peers, and sometimes they were called Paladins, or dwellers in

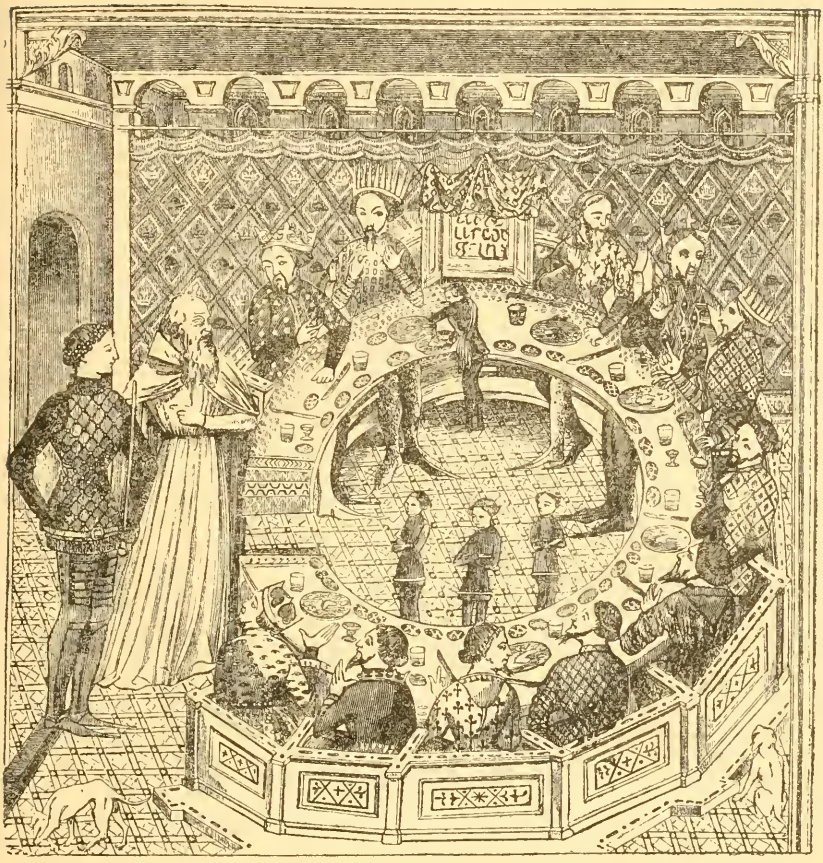
the palace. They performed most amazing exploits. They tamed wild horses, they overcame giants, they captured cities, rescued fair ladies, and conquered demons who flew over the world on winged steeds. Two of the Peers, Roland and Oliver, were once chosen to fight a duel in order to settle a disagreement between Charlemagne and one of his underlords. Their faces were hidden by their helmets, and neither knew who his adversary was. For two long hours they fought, but neither could gain the smallest advantage over the other. At length Roland struck so savage a blow that his sword stuck fast in Oliver's shield; and at the same instant Oliver struck at Roland's breastplate so fiercely that his sword broke off at the handle. They wrestled together, but neither fell. Then they tore off each other's helmet, and behold, each found that he had been fighting with his dearest friend. "I yield," said Oliver; "I am vanquished," cried Roland. It is from this that the saying arose, "A Roland for an Oliver."

The most famous story of the Paladins of Charlemagne is told in the poem called the *Song of Roland*, which relates how the brave knight came to his death at Roncesvalles through the treachery of an enemy. There is a tradition that when William the Conqueror

came to England his minstrel Taillefer rode out in front of the line of battle singing this *Song of Roland*, and struck the first blow at the English for his master.

Arthur is supposed to have been a British hero who resisted the Saxons on their coming to Britain. The romances say that he and his knights sat at a famous table, round in shape that it might have neither head nor foot. They contended with the heathen invaders, they took part in jousts and wonderful tournaments, and they had wild and bold adventures in their attempts to avenge the wrongs that came within their ken. In their hall of feasting there was a special seat, or siege, for each; but one, the Siege Perilous, was vacant, for should any one who was not altogether pure in heart venture to occupy it, the earth would open and swallow him. One day an old, old man led a beautiful youth named Galahad into Arthur's hall and bade him seat himself in the Siege Perilous; and, behold, when the covering was lifted from it, there appeared written on the chair, "This is the siege of Sir Galahad, the good knight."

At this point, the story of Arthur and his knight mingles with another, that of the Holy Grail, or the cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper. According to the legend, this cup was brought by Joseph of Arimathea



KING ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE

to Britain. As men became sinful, it vanished, for it could be seen by him only who was pure and true in heart. It came to pass that one evening while the knights sat at supper, a cracking of thunder was heard

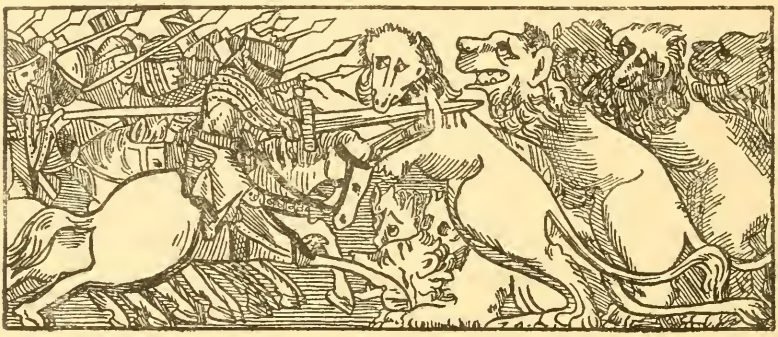
and a beam of light seven times brighter than that of the sun passed through the hall; and in the beam was the Holy Grail, but covered with white samite that none might see it. The knights took a solemn vow that they would set forth and wander through and through the world until the vision of the Holy Thing should come to them. Their courage was good, and their adventures were many, but to Galahad alone, of unstained heart, did the vision come. "Sithence was there never no man so hardy for to say that hee had seene the sancgreall," says the old story.

From Iceland comes the *Heimskringla*, or world's circle, so named from the first words of the manuscript. From Iceland, too, come the *Edda* and the *Younger Edda*, and all three are full of wild tales of gods and heroes. One of the best known of the Icelandic tales is the saga, or hero story, of Frithiof. The story says that as a child Frithiof played with Ingeborg and learned to love her well; but when they were grown up and he begged her brothers for her hand, they scorned him and drove him away; for he was but a subject, while the father of Ingeborg had been a king. The brothers went to war, and the two lovers met in the temple of Baldur, the god of beauty and truth. For a man to speak with

a woman in this temple was looked upon as irreverent to the gods; and in punishment Frithiof was bidden to go to the Orkney Islands and collect a tribute which had long been due. He set off on the dangerous journey in his magic vessel *Ellida*, which knew his voice and obeyed his word, and after storms at sea and adventures on land he brought back the gold. But much had come to pass while he had been away. His home had been burned by Helgé, Ingeborg's brother, and Ingeborg had become the wife of a king, Sigurd Ring. Frithiof flung the purse of gold in Helgé's face and fled to his ship *Ellida*. Over the world he wandered, sailing, fighting, winning treasure for his men and fame for himself; but all the time longing eagerly for Ingeborg. At length he felt that he must know whether she was happy, and he made his way as a stranger to the court of King Sigurd Ring. The king begged him to remain as his guest, and henceforth wherever Sigurd and Ingeborg might be, there was Frithiof, caring for them and saving them from danger.

King Sigurd was an old man, and when the time of his death drew near, he called Frithiof to his side. "I have known you from the first," he said. "I have tested you and found you ever as true as you were brave. In a

little while Ingeborg shall be your own. Love her well and care for my child, who is to be king in my stead." So it was that Frithiof gained the beautiful Ingeborg for his wife. He guarded the kingdom until the child was of an age to govern it; then he went away with Ingeborg to a kingdom of his own which he had won in battle.



HOW ALEXANDER DID BATTLE

The stories that have been briefly given here are only a few of the many that were the delight of the people of the days of chivalry. One other sort of writing pleased them greatly, namely, that which took for its subject the deeds of Alexander the Great, or some other worthy of classical times. It is true that any one of these heroes would have been amazed at the actions ascribed to him by the writers; but that did not matter to the people who listened to the romances and appar-

ently found it quite as satisfactory to make Alexander the hero of a good story as any other man.

From the German comes the "beast epic," the story of wicked Reynard the fox who is always playing tricks on Bruin the bear, Tybert the cat, Isegrim the wolf, and the other animals. It is really a satire on the state of Germany in the Middle Ages; but the best way to enjoy it is to forget that it is anything but a good story and read it purely for the fun of it. By the way, it is because of this story that even to this day we call the fox Reynard.

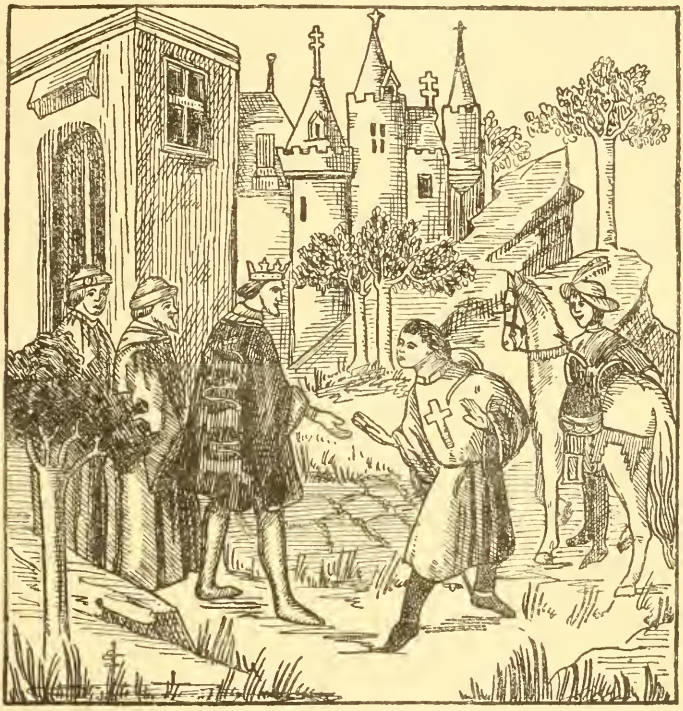
Another fashion of writing about animals is shown in the "bestiaries," or beast books. A chapter in a bestiary described some remarkable act of a beast, such as was never seen in the Middle Ages or at any other time, and drew from it an elaborate moral. The following is taken from the *Ancren Riwle*, and its natural history as well as its moral was probably believed most implicitly by the recluses for whom it was written:—

The pelican is a lean bird, so peevish and so wrathful that often, in her anger, she killeth her own young ones when they molest her, and then, soon after, she is very sorry, and maketh great moan, and smiteth herself with her bill wherewith she slew her young, and draweth blood out of her breast, and with the blood she then quickeneth her slain birds. This pelican is the

peevish recluse. Her birds are her good works, which she often slayeth with the bill of sharp wrath; and when she hath so done, she, as the pelican doth, quickly repents, and with her own bill pecks her breast; that is, with confession of her mouth wherewith she sinned and slew her good works, draweth the blood of sin out of her breast, that is, of the heart in which is the life of the soul, and thus shall then quicken her slain birds, which are her works.

A delightful old book called *The Voyages and Travels of Sir John Mandeville* was a great favorite. It describes the way to Jerusalem and purports to have been written as a guidebook for those who wished to make the pilgrimage. When people read it, they felt, as in watching the mystery plays, that they were gaining something religiously and also having an exceedingly good time. "Sir John" sees as many marvels as Sindbad the sailor. By the Dead Sea he finds apples that are fair to look upon, but within are nothing but ashes and cinders. He gazes at people with ears that hang down to their knees, upon hens that bear wool, upon pigmies, giants, and griffins. He closes his book with the request that all its readers will pray for him as he will pray for them; and surely a man who has written so entertainingly has a right to ask the favor of those who enjoy his book.

The crusades gave rise of course to tales and romances without number. In one some returning crusaders brought with them an image of the Virgin Mary. Sud-



SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE

denly it became so heavy that they could not carry it. Therefore they stopped and built a church for it on the spot. Another story, coming from Burgundy, said that a long-bearded crusader, sick and travel-worn, appeared at

his old home in the garb of a pilgrim. The house was full of rejoicing, for its mistress, who had waited many weary years in the hope that her husband would return, was now about to marry a second time. She had always kept half of a gold ring that she and her husband had divided; and now he produced the other half. There was no second marriage, and the wife and her long lost husband lived together again in great happiness. But it seemed that the crusader had been taken captive by the Saracens and had only been allowed to go home on condition of returning to captivity if he could not find money for his ransom. The money could not be raised. He said a sorrowful farewell to his wife and went back to Saladin. When the generous Saracen heard the story, he bade that the honest man be set free. "But name your oldest son for me," he said, "and let your coat of arms be bells and crescents."

The writings of the Middle Ages may be divided into two classes; those written in Latin, which are generally dull and uninteresting, and those written in the languages of the different peoples, which are generally bright and entertaining. In most of the countries that had been ruled by the Romans, especially Italy, France, and Spain, the people spoke what are called the Romance lan-

guages. These were more or less like that of the Romans, but far simpler; for instance, the Latin word for mother, *mater*, became in French *mère;* and instead of saying *matris* for *of the mother* and *matri* for *to the mother*, people used prepositions and said *de la mère* and *à la mère*. It was much easier to remember a few prepositions than to learn how to decline every noun. Verbs and other parts of speech were gradually simplified in somewhat the same fashion; and by the eleventh century there were languages which were far more manageable for light poems and stories than the more dignified Latin. The use of rhyme and accent in poetry had come in. No one knows just how this came about; but it is certain that the taste of people had gradually changed, and now, instead of liking the Latin fashion of "quantity," that is, of giving to each syllable a fixed length of time, either long or short, they preferred to accent certain syllables of a line and end it with the words or syllables that rhymed. Then it was that the troubadours of southern France and, a little later, the trouveurs, or trouvères, of northern France, began to compose their songs. The troubadours used the form of Old French that was called the *langue d'oc*, because in southern France "yes" was "oc." In northern France "yes" was "œil,"

and therefore the northern tongue was called the *langue d'œil.*

The troubadours composed chiefly love songs and battle songs. Everybody seemed to love poetry, and any wanderer was welcome at the most lordly castle if he could only compose verses and sing them to the music of the harp. A knight would have thought it far beneath him to joust with a common man; but to sing songs together was quite a different matter, and the proudest noble would not have found it any disgrace to mingle his voice with that of a beggar. After a tournament was over and the prizes had been distributed, the lady of the castle often opened what was called a Court of Love. Here knights and even sovereigns vied with one another in singing extempore verses. Richard the Lionhearted was as proud of his skill as a troubadour as of his prowess in battle. At the close of the Court of Love, the ladies discussed at length the merits of the different singers, and gave to the most deserving prizes which were as much valued as those of the tournament.

Some of our best accounts of tournaments, as, indeed, of battles and many other things, came from the pen of Froissart, a French clergyman who wrote at the end of the fourteenth century. A nobleman employed

him to write a history of the wars of the time; and Froissart mounted his horse and ambled along from one place to another, wherever a battle had been fought or any other event of special interest had come to pass. He

THE PALACE OF LOVE

talked to people and gathered all the information that he could and then wrote it in his *Chronicles*. He does not care what caused the war or who wins, and he is just as jubilant over an English victory as a French; the one thing that he wants to do is to get hold of a good story and tell it. It is he who paints such a picture of the Black Prince humbly serving the French king, who has been taken prisoner at the battle of Poitiers; and it is he who describes so vividly the coming of the six wealthy citizens of conquered Calais to Edward III, in their shirts, barefooted, and with ropes about their necks, that by their death the anger of the king might be appeased and their fellow citizens forgiven. Just at the moment when the reader despairs of their being saved, Froissart brings in Queen Philippa with so earnest a plea for mercy that the king cannot refuse to pardon them. Indeed, whenever one discovers a particularly lively account of any event that came within the ken of Froissart, it is almost sure to have been written by his pen. It is no wonder that, as he roamed about from castle to castle, telling his tales wherever he went, he always found a welcome.

About a century later than the time when the troubadours began to flourish in southern France, the trou-

vères in northern France were singing in the langue d'œil, and were great favorites at the courts of the dukes of Normandy. The Normans were descendants of the fierce vikings of an earlier day who had settled in France. They had lost none of their boldness and daring, but they had adopted French customs and the French language. From these trouvères came gay little tales of love and adventure called *fabliaux*, many of the mystery plays that have already been mentioned, and brilliant romances of chivalry. The craze for these romances and for even the feebler imitations of them that were composed somewhat later was so intense and lasted so long that at the beginning of the seventeenth century Cervantes of Spain wrote his famous *Don Quixote* as a parody on them. The good old Don is described as having read so many of these productions that his brain is touched, and with a helmet of pasteboard, an ancient suit of rusty armor, a farm horse for a steed of war, and a country laborer for a squire, he set out in search of adventures. He found them in plenty. To his disordered mind some windmills on a plain seemed to be evil giants. One can guess the result of his valiant attack upon them. A flock of sheep moving toward him he is convinced is an immense army of knights, and he

charges on them most valiantly. It is no wonder that this book put an end to the composing of romances and the fashion of reading them.

In Germany, too, between the twelfth century and the fourteenth, there were many poets. Some sang of Arthur and the Holy Grail and Charlemagne and the Nibelungs; but far more tenderly and elegantly and with much better taste than the poets of the langue d'oc or those of the langue d'œil. Some of the German poets were called *minnesingers*, or love-singers, and their poems are really dainty and graceful and far more refined in feeling and expression than the rather coarse songs of the Courts of Love. Knights, priests, wandering students, kings, and simple country folk met together in the joy of poetry and music, and sang of love and sorrow and the beauties of spring with a pureness and freshness that hold their charm even to this day.

MINNESINGERS

The names of two great authors shine out from the Middle Ages, the Italian Dante and the English Chau-

cer. Dante wrote about 1300 his famous *Divine Comedy*. In this poem he passes through the gates of hell under the guidance of Virgil. He visits one "circle" after another, each occupied by some one class of criminals, and sees the terrible punishments inflicted upon them. He then enters purgatory; and here sinners are expiating the wrongs that they have committed. Those who have been greedy suffer constantly from hunger and thirst. Those who held their heads too high in their pride are dragged down by heavy weights. Those who were lazy are now forced to run about continually. Each penance is adapted to the fault. On top of the mountain of purgatory is the maiden Beatrice whom Dante had loved even as a child and had lost by her early death. She now becomes his guide and leads him through the nine heavens, where he meets the great and good of all ages and finally is permitted a vision of God and his angels. The poem is great because its language is so rich and beautiful, because its characters are alive and its pictures so vivid that an artist could work from them, and, most of all, because it is so complete in its plan and in every detail as to show a marvelous imagination.

It is said that the good folk of Florence used to point

at Dante as he went along the street and whisper half fearfully, "That 's the man who has been in hell"; but I fancy that people said of Chaucer, "That 's the man who sees everything and enjoys whatever he sees," for he seems to take such genuine pleasure in every common sight and in studying every person. In his *Canterbury Tales*, wherein a large company of all sorts of people go on pilgrimage to the shrine of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury, he is apparently as much interested in one as in another, but he treats each one in different fashion. He looks with respect upon the "verray parfit gentil knyght," and he has a kindly word for the gay young squire who is singing or whistling from morning to night. He makes us see the coy and dainty ways of the nun, and he really cannot help making a sly jest at her French, which was not that of Paris, but

After the scole of Stratford-atte-Bowe, —

a town in England. He is a bit indignant at the friar, who "knew the tavernes well in every town," and is better acquainted with innkeepers and barmaids than with lepers and beggars; but he has a warm sympathy with the poor clerk who would rather have books than gorgeous robes; and he speaks most reverently of the good parish priest who loved to give to the poor and who never scorned

even a sinful man. In the poem these good folk tell stories, stories of chivalry, of the crafty fox who stole Chanticleer, of magic swords, of fairies and giants and enchanted steeds; and in each the author is at home and enjoying himself. He drops in so many little confidential speeches to the reader that one feels as if the poet were right at his elbow instead of being five centuries away.

These are snatches of the writings that come to mind first when one thinks of the days of knighthood. Leaving out the two great names of Dante and Chaucer, there is little that has any great excellence; but it is entertaining and rich in promise, and the promise has been nobly fulfilled.

CHAPTER XIV

Science and Medicine

The good folk of the Middle Ages were as much interested in the world of nature around them as are the people of to-day. They wondered what made lightning and thunder, why men died in the water and fish in the air, what would cure their various illnesses, why the moon rises, where the sun goes when it sets, and hundreds of other questions. Most of the studying of the day was carried on in monasteries, as has been said before, and the Venerable Bede and others wrote long treatises on nature, together with some remarkable explanations of its mysteries. In the twelfth century numerous universities were founded; and by the time that they were well established and had become strong and powerful, a fresh supply of knowledge came to them through the Saracens. Long before this, the Saracens had translated into their own language, the Arabic, the works of the learned Greeks of centuries earlier, including especially what they knew of stars and planets and comets and eclipses. Many Saracens were now living about the Mediterranean

Sea, and through them manuscripts were brought into Europe and translated from the Arabic into the European tongues.

Astronomy was looked upon as an exceedingly practical study, because it was by this science that the festivals of the Church were dated. The astronomers of the time knew something of eclipses and they had tables of stars and planets. They studied the observations made by the wise men of the East for many centuries, and really learned a great deal. Unfortunately, they made one great mistake. For four hundred years it has been known that the earth and the other planets revolve around the sun. In the Middle Ages, however, people believed that the sun revolved about the earth. The sky, they thought, was a vast hollow sphere which revolved once a day. It was because

AN ASTRONOMER

of this mistake that when they tried to reason about what they had seen, their conclusions were all wrong, no matter how correct their observations might have been.

Now when people believed that the whole starry universe was made for their especial benefit, it was not very unreasonable to take it for granted that the stars, their arrangement in the sky, and their movements had something to do with human affairs. Anything unusual was always alarming. Comets were a source of terror. No one knew whence they came or whither they were going. They were uncanny, and even the educated feared some awful disaster when one of these fiery wanderers appeared in the sky. In the middle of the fifteenth century, a large comet was seen which terrified all Europe. Even before its appearance people were in dread, for the Turks had crossed the Hellespont, and there was reason to believe that they would overrun the Continent. Then came the added horror of the comet, and no one could tell what awful calamity this might portend It is no wonder that the Pope ordered the church bells to be rung at noon, and the Ave Maria to be said three times a day instead of twice. To this prayer was added the petition, "Lord, save us from the Devil, the Turk, and the Comet."

Comets, fortunately, did not appear very often, but it was believed that the other heavenly bodies, also, had an effect upon people and could make them successful or unsuccessful. A man who could interpret the significance of the heavens was called an astrologer, and the science, or make-believe science, was called astrology. When a child was born, the father hurried away to an astrologer, if he could afford to consult one, to have what was called a horoscope calculated, that is, to have its future life predicted according to the aspect of the heavens at its birth. The most important constellations are situated in a wide belt around the heavens called the zodiac, and are therefore called the signs of the zodiac. There are twelve of these constellations: Aries, or the ram; Gemini, or the twins; Leo, the lion; Capricornus, or the goat; and others. The one which was in the ascendant, or just risen above the eastern horizon, at the time of the child's birth, was supposed to have great influence upon his life. But this was only the beginning of the astrologer's calculations. He fixed a point in the sky according to the position of the sun and moon at the time, and, beginning at that, he divided the heavens into twelve "houses." These houses were divided and subdivided. To each house some planet was assigned,

and every planet had its special influence. Jupiter, for instance, had power to give one riches and honors, Venus would bestow love and warm friendship. If, then, Jupiter chanced to be in the house assigned to him and in a favorable sign, his influence upon the child would be so strong that he could hardly help winning wealth and distinction. People consulted astrologers about the proper time to begin a journey or a business undertaking, about a favorable day for a marriage or the coronation of a king, and, indeed, so far as they could afford it, about an endless number of even the smallest affairs of life.

Even in medicine the position of the planets was of the utmost importance. When a doctor was sent for, he came on horseback with the bells on his bridle rein jingling so merrily that he could be heard a long way off. An assistant followed him and as many servants as his purse would permit, bearing five or six instruments and numerous sorts of ointment. When he reached the home of the sick man, his first business was not to count his pulse or note his temperature, but to inquire under what constellation he was born. With this knowledge he would set to work to ascertain what remedy would be of service. But, however valuable the medicine might be and however much it might be needed,

it must not be taken when the moon was in an unfavorable sign; for then it would do harm rather than good. When an epidemic appeared, it was of course laid to the stars, or the power of evil spirits. Two unfavorable planets meeting in the same degree of the zodiac would account for any pestilence, or so people thought. There was, however, one other way of explaining the appearance of any general illness, and that was to lay it to the Jews. In France, Germany, and Italy, Jews were many times accused of poisoning the wells or even the air, and were either imprisoned or put to death on this charge.

Some of the medicines of the time were most absurd, and many were revolting. Gold filings were thought good for leprosy, and so was an adder boiled with leeks. A more agreeable remedy for the illness of a child was to weigh the child and then offer up at some shrine its weight in bread or grain or cheese or wax. Many herbs were used, such as sage, wormwood, and pennyroyal. Medicines were hardly expected to do much good of themselves. To make a dose powerful, the sick man must repeat a certain Psalm twelve times together with several Paternosters while the medicine was being prepared. It was far more likely to effect a cure if he could

take it at the shrine of some saint. With some remedies one should always repeat a charm.

Physicians are described as wearing expensive robes of silk with trimmings of fur. "Physic" in *Piers Plowman* wears a hood richly trimmed with fur, and gold buttons on his cloak. They demanded large fees and received them. In other cases a man might choose whether to purchase or to do without; but in illness there was left him only the highwayman's choice, "Your money or your life." Chaucer makes a fling at these exorbitant charges and says of the learned doctor among his Canterbury pilgrims,

> For gold in phisik is a cordial,
> Therfor he loved gold in special.

Poor folk had not the money necessary to buy their lives of these great doctors, and therefore they went with their ailments to the barber. He was permitted by law to apply plasters and ointments to wounds that did not threaten to become dangerous, and often to give simple remedies. In most diseases, the first treatment was to bleed the patient, and the barber's pole of to-day is a reminder of the custom. In France, before any serious operation could be performed, the bishop or the feudal lord of the patient had to be consulted. Talis-

mans were made use of for remedies or to keep away illness. These consisted of a stone or a piece of metal upon which was cut a figure or an inscription. In the earlier part of the Middle Ages, runes were often used for the inscriptions. These were only the letters of the earliest northern alphabet; but so few people could read that they were looked upon as something having magical powers. In later times, most talismans were brought from the East, and were engraved with inscriptions in Persian or Arabic. Even in health these tokens were highly valued. A species of charm known as a philter was supposed to have the power to arouse love. Sometimes a magic drink for the same purpose was prepared and given to the person in question; but oftener the one who wished to become beloved wore a philter consisting of powdered loadstone, nail-parings,

A DENTAL OPERATION

and human blood, or other absurd combinations. If a man wished to win honor, he might cut the image of Jupiter on a white stone or a piece of tin; and if this was done when the planets were favorable, he would be sure to gain his wish. Of course there were stories upon stories of cures wrought in illness by such means. Roger Bacon, who was perhaps the most sensible scientific man of his age, declared that charms and talismans were of much value; but he explained that this was not because they acted as remedies, but because they made the patient calm and hopeful and thus aided in his recovery.

It is a wonder, however, that when people were sick, they should ever have expected charms or anything else to be of service, for so many illnesses were thought to be caused by witchcraft. Some persons were believed to possess what was known as the "evil eye." Whoever first met their gaze in the morning was sure to pine away and die; and, indeed, some evil was likely to befall one upon whom they looked at any hour of the day. If a man wished to take the life of an enemy, he could do so conveniently by driving a nail or a wooden peg into a wall, pronouncing the name of the victim at each blow. Another way was to shoot an arrow into the air,

praying to some demon to direct its flight to the person named. This arrow would leave a wound which was invisible, to be sure, but which would certainly cause death within three days. Another method of ridding one's self of a foe was to make an image of him in wax. Under the right arm of the image one must place the heart of a swallow, and under the left arm its liver. Whatever injury was done to the figure was supposed to be felt by the person whom it represented. If a needle was pushed into its side, the person was expected to feel a sharp pain in the side. In case of sudden death, people thought first of witchcraft, and it was sometimes dangerous to the safety of even an innocent man if his enemy died too unexpectedly. It was far safer to build a fire of wood and vervain, set the waxen image before it, and let it melt. Then the person would slowly but surely waste away. This belief in the waxen image was so firmly fixed that if a man had a hawk which he could not succeed in managing, he would sometimes send a waxen image of it to the shrine of some saint that he might have better success.

Besides the danger of being bewitched, there were the four "humors," or qualities, to be reckoned with. All things are made of earth, air, fire, and water, but in

varying proportions, declared the wisdom of the Middle Ages. Earth has the humor of being cold and dry; water of being cold and moist; air of being hot and moist; and fire of being hot and dry. It went on further to say that earth corresponded to autumn and the melancholic temperament; water to winter and the phlegmatic; air to spring and the sanguine; and fire to summer and the choleric. If these humors were perfectly balanced, the person was well — and to this day we keep the phrase "good-humored" — but if there chanced to be too much of any one of them, illness was the result; and it was the business of the doctor to decide which humor was in excess.

Mixtures to cure diseases were often prepared by the alchemists, or chemists of the time. With the chanting of charms and the drawing of magic circles an alchemist would prepare a draught warranted to heal a sick man, give pleasant dreams, or make one invulnerable. To the common folk, their work was so mysterious and the sights and sounds from their laboratories so strange and awe-inspiring that whenever they passed the house of an alchemist, they crossed themselves and prayed to be delivered from the power of the Devil. They were ready to believe the most absurd stories of the abilities

of these men. One was said to be able to call back to his purse whatever coins he might have paid out of it. Another was believed to have made a wooden image that would rise from its seat and open the door whenever a knock was heard. Most mysterious and most

A GERMAN ALCHEMIST

popular of all such wonders was the brazen head which Roger Bacon was said to have made. Success in his undertakings and a vast amount of knowledge were to come to him if he only heard it speak. When he had become too weary to listen any longer, he set an assistant to watch it. While the master slept, the head suddenly

spoke. "Time is," it said. "There is no use in arousing my master to hear what every one knows," thought the assistant; and he let Bacon sleep on. The head spoke again, and said, "Time was." This, too, the assistant thought was of no importance. Half an hour later it spoke for the third time. It said, "Time is past," fell from its place, and was broken to fragments; and so it was that Bacon himself, its maker, never heard it speak.

The alchemists experimented on various substances, treated them by fire, then by water, then united them, and carefully noted the results. Thus far they were in the true path of science; but they could make little advance beyond this, because they began their work with some false notions which they could never lay aside. They believed, for instance, that earth, air, fire, and water were peopled by demons; and when the facts did not agree with their theories, they explained matters by saying that the demons were interfering. Of course they believed in the influence of the stars, and often they tried to connect the stars and the earth by odors. If a man wished to secure the influence of the sun, for instance, he mixed saffron, amber, musk, clove, incense, the brain of an eagle, and the blood of a cock, and burned them.

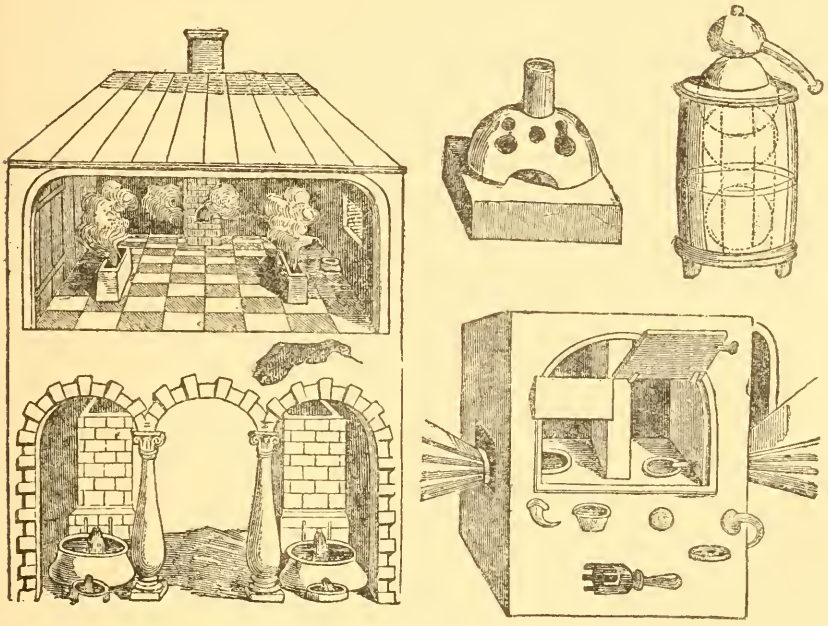
The alchemists had three aims in particular. One was to discover a "universal solvent," that is, some substance that would dissolve everything into its elements. The second was to make an elixir that would enable a person to keep youth and life as long as he chose. Even the reasonable Roger Bacon thought this was quite possible; and after the discovery of America, people felt sure that somewhere in the wonderful new land the elixir would be found. Many believed that the marvelous draught would not be compounded by an alchemist, but was only the water of some magic fountain. When Ponce de Leon made his voyage to America in 1512, he set out in eager hope of finding this fountain of youth, for he was fast becoming an old man, and he longed to be young again.

The third quest of the alchemists was to discover what was known as the "philosopher's stone." They thought that all metals were made of sulphur and mercury, that in gold the sulphur and mercury were pure, while in the baser metals they were more or less corrupt. If the "stone" could be discovered, this corruption could be cured or driven away from any metal, and pure gold would remain. Generation after generation of alchemists labored in this quest. Many of them were

honest and were trying their best to make discoveries that would be of value to mankind. Others sought only a method of making gold and so winning riches for themselves. Then, too, there were numerous rascals who had a smattering of the learning of the alchemists and went about persuading people that they could turn the baser metals into gold or silver, and getting money from them for sharing the secret of the method. Chaucer tells the story of one of these quacks who turned mercury into the purest of silver before the face and eyes of a trustful priest and obtained forty pounds from him for the recipe. The secret was that he brought with him a beechen coal in which a hole had been bored and filled with silver filings. It was easy to slip this coal in with the others in such a way that the wax which stopped up the hole would melt and let the silver fall into the crucible. The second trick of the deceiver was to stir the mercury in the crucible with a hollow rod in which was an ounce of silver filings kept in with wax in the same manner. After the priest had paid his forty pounds and the quack had disappeared, he tried his magical recipe; but in spite of all his efforts not a bit of silver could be found in the crucible.

The alchemists did not discover the philosopher's

stone, but in their experiments they did gain some useful knowledge. Among other things they discovered soap, they learned how to separate silver from lead, and



AN ALCHEMIST'S APPARATUS

how to make porcelain. The Chinese knew of gunpowder many centuries earlier; but Roger Bacon is thought to have learned that with sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal an explosion might be produced, and so to have discovered it anew. The ideas of some of the alchemists ran far out into the future. Bacon predicted that the

time would come when boats would move without oars, and wagons without animals to draw them, when men would be able to fly through the air, and bridges without any supporting piers would span the widest rivers. He believed, too, that an elixir would be discovered that would enable people to live as long as they chose.

Several of Bacon's predictions have long ago come to pass; but they probably seemed to the good folk of his time far more absurd than many strange things that appeared to them a matter of course. All through the period people of education believed that the earth was a sphere; but they were ready to accept without question the wildest stories of what might be seen in the parts that were unknown to them. In Africa, it was said, great dragons were found from whose brains precious stones might be taken, and also beasts so venomous that whoever looked them in the face fell dead. It was believed that tribes lived in that country who had three or four eyes in their foreheads. Other tribes fed upon nothing but honeysuckles dried in smoke by the sun. Ireland was the special country of wonders. In one lake, so the story went, a rod of hazel would turn to ash and one of ash to hazel. Another lake had quite as amazing properties, for if a

rod was made to stand upright in the water, the part in the earth became iron, that in the water was turned to stone, while that above the water was not changed. In Ireland, too, there was said to be a little island whose inhabitants could never die. When they were overcome with the weaknesses of age, they had to be carried elsewhere that they might find relief in death. In Finland, so people thought, certain men had the power to raise the wind. They tied knots in a cord, and if they desired a gentle breeze, they let out the cord to one knot. For a storm, they let out to four or five knots. Concerning India, people would believe the most fantastic imaginings. Its ruler was thought to be one Prester John, or priest John, who had governed the land for many centuries. Some of his subjects were said to be more than five cubits in height. Others had dogs' heads and barked like dogs. Near the source of the Ganges were men who had no mouths. Naturally, they neither ate nor drank; but they lived on the perfume of flowers.

Concerning animals and plants there was a sort of imaginative natural history which was stated in so authoritative a manner and with so many details that it must have needed a brave man to doubt its truth. "A griffin," says an old book, "is a flying thing. Its head

and wings are like the eagle's; the rest of the body is like that of a lion." The "enchirius," whatever that may be, is described as a little fish half a foot long which clings to a stone when a storm is coming, that it may not be blown about. Its ability to cling must have been considerable, for it was said that if it caught a good hold of a ship, it could hold it perfectly quiet. Still more startling is the statement that when a whale becomes old, earth collects upon his body to such an extent that herbs and small bushes take root and grow. Cranes, it was said, seat themselves comfortably on the ground when they are weary; but they always leave watchers on guard. The watchers stand on one foot. In the other foot they hold a little stone, so that if they chance to go to sleep the stone will fall and arouse them. No serpent will come into the shade of an ash tree; and if the creature be encircled partly with ash leaves and partly with fire, he will flee through the fire rather than touch the leaves. The young ravens live on dew until they begin to show black feathers. Then the mother bird feeds them. Toads and serpents cannot bear the fragrance of the grapevine blossom, and when the vine is in bloom, they escape from the vineyard. These are some of the "facts" of natural history as believed in the Middle

Ages. Folk were taught that there were satyrs with horns and the feet of goats, cyclops with one eye in the middle of their foreheads, and people with eyes in their shoulders and neither nose nor head. They believed that certain men had made pacts with Satan, and in conse-

THE MAN-WOLF AND OTHERS

quence were obliged once a year to take the face of a dog, a wolf, a bull, or a pig, and that these monsters searched the woods to find children to devour. But of all the fancies that were once regarded as facts of natural history, that of the phœnix was dearest to the good people of the age. There was only one phœnix in the world at a time. It lived from three to five hundred years, then,

when it began to be weary and feeble, it made a nest of sweet smelling woods. This was set afire by the rays of the sun; and when it was well ablaze the bird entered the flames and was burned to ashes. Three days later, a little worm was found in the ashes, which grew and put on feathers and became another phœnix to take the place of the first. Cassia, it was said, was found in the nest of the phœnix, and either fell to the ground of its own accord or was struck down by leaden arrows. For some reason, people were not so willing to accept this story of the cassia as other marvels, and some ventured to say boldly that the tale was invented to raise the price of the article. About the mandrake, however, they were ready to believe anything, no matter how impossible. The root of the mandrake is often forked, and has a rough resemblance to a human body. That was enough to serve as a foundation for a story that it was the offspring of some person who had been put to death for murder. It shrieked when it was pulled, said the story; and to pull it was at best a dangerous business. He who set about it must wait until the wind blew from a favorable quarter. He must make three circles about the plant with a sword; but he must not venture to dig until after the sun had gone down. If one

obeyed these directions carefully, he might hope to escape harm.

Various methods of divination were resorted to in order to read the future or to learn whether an enterprise would be likely to succeed. One way was to hang a ring inside a pitcher by a thread and read the fates by the number of times that it struck the sides of the pitcher. Sometimes a fire was built of certain kinds of wood, and it was believed that the shape and movement of the flames and the smoke would reveal things that were about to be. One might fast and pray and then open a Bible. The verse upon which his eye first lighted would be significant. Sometimes instead of the Bible a copy of Virgil was taken. To discover hidden treasure, one must use the hand of a man who had been hanged. Whether the predictions of a sorcerer were eventually shown to be true or false, the people believed in sorcery just the same; for if his words proved false, they simply declared that he was not a true sorcerer, and that some man of greater powers would have succeeded. Indeed, so far as the sorcerer himself was concerned, it was not well to succeed too often; for all magic was supposed to be more or less connected with the Devil, and if the magician was too successful, whispers would go abroad among

his enemies that so intimate a friend of Satan ought to be burned to death or at least to be imprisoned. It was believed that at stated times sorcerers and witches met together in some gloomy and unlawful place to boast of the tricks they had played and learn of one another and of Satan how they might still further deceive those who consulted them. This meeting was known as the "Witches' Sabbath."

One great obstacle in the way of real progress in science was the general belief in analogy. A magnet will draw steel; therefore it was concluded that it would draw pain from the body. The "universal solvent" which the philosophers were ever hoping to discover would separate every substance into its elements; therefore it was supposed that it would also dissolve disease and do away with it. Another difficulty was that the causes of the phenomena of nature and the relation of cause to effect were so little understood that with most people if one event happened after another, this was regarded as sufficient proof that it was caused by that other. No matter how absurd and useless a medicine might be, if a sick man recovered after taking a dose of it, no one questioned that the medicine had wrought the cure.

A third great weakness in the science of the times was that instead of studying nature and trying to explain what they saw, the philosophers set out with definite opinions on numerous points and tried to make nature and their own observations fit the theories. The alchemists, as has been said, set out with the belief that all metals were made of sulphur and mercury, and they could never understand why the metals would not act like sulphur and mercury. Another difficulty was that if any two things looked alike, the philosophers were certain that there was some relation between them; but to discover what it was they used their imagination rather than their observation. For instance, crystal looks like ice; therefore they decided that if ice could be kept for many years, it would turn into crystal. Pearls have a dewy appearance and are found in the shells of oysters. That was proof enough that pearls came from dew; and the philosophers decided that in the nights of early spring the oyster opened its shell to receive the drop of dew and changed it into a pearl. In a thunderstorm, the sky is often covered with heavy, swiftly changing clouds; therefore it was regarded as evident that thunder is the noise produced by breaking up the clouds. This same fashion of fancying a connection between any two things

that resembled each other was also carried into medicine. The wood sorrel has a heart-shaped leaf; therefore it would cure any disease of the heart. Liverwort, or hepatica, has a three-lobed leaf, and the liver has three lobes; therefore hepatica was of course beneficial to the liver. Certain ferns have seeds so tiny that they can hardly be seen by the naked eye; therefore fern seed had the power of making one invisible.

Such were some of the beliefs and superstitions of the people of the Middle Ages; but the folly of these vain imaginings was realized by some. One man who wrote an encyclopædia of general knowledge exclaimed against trying to read the future by noting the flight of a flock of crows, and said that he did not think it lawful to believe that God had revealed his counsel to crows. It is no longer necessary, as was the case in the seventh century, for a worthy bishop to beg his clergy not to observe Thursday, the day of Thor or Jupiter, as a day of rest, not to fear that a sneeze proved the presence of evil spirits, and not to visit sorcerers or makers of talismans. Nevertheless, there are many good folk even now who trust to absurd treatments of disease, who believe in signs and omens, in lucky and unlucky days and numbers, in the misfortune portended by the breaking of a looking-

glass or by the howling of a dog under the window, and in a thousand other superstitions; and even to-day the plain common sense of the man who did not believe that God revealed his counsel to crows would often be most welcome.

CHAPTER XV

Architecture and the Arts

During the Middle Ages a vast amount of building was done. There were not only the castles and manor houses and town halls and monasteries which have already been spoken of, but there were also many magnificent churches and cathedrals. Three of the most famous of these are Saint Sophia in Constantinople, Saint Mark in Venice, and the cathedral at Cologne. Saint Sophia is an immense building with slender towers and a great flat dome. Within, one notices first of all rows of pillars separated by round arches, and above these other and still other rows, making long galleries. These columns are of many hues, and the walls are faced with slabs of marble of all tints. There is gilding and there is a glow of color wherever one looks. Above it all is the bold sweep of the great dome, encircled by fifty windows. This interior may not be dignified or harmonious, but it is dazzling in its luxuriance and sparkle and gorgeousness. Saint Sophia was built in the sixth century by the emperor Justinian, and the walls were then decorated

SAN SOPHIA, CONSTANTINOPLE

with brilliant mosaics representing scenes in his life. It was a Christian church until 1453, when the Turks captured the city. Since then it has been used as a Mohammedan mosque. The Koran, the sacred book of the Mohammedans, forbids making a representation of anything having life; and therefore the Turks covered the mosaics with whitewash.

The style of architecture in which Saint Sophia was built takes its name from the ancient name of the city and is called Byzantine. It is marked by domes and cupolas, and especially by long rows of round arches resting upon columns, and other arches resting upon them, making arcades, or corridors, one above another. It is always richly ornamented with gold and glowing colors.

One glance at the church of Saint Mark in Venice would show that this, too, is of Byzantine architecture, for it has so many domes and cupolas and arcades. During the century and a half that the Venetians were building it, every vessel that came to Venice from the East was required to bring pillars and marbles for the church. It is no wonder that the principal front has five hundred columns. Over the centre of the vestibule are the famous "horses of Saint Mark." When Constanti-

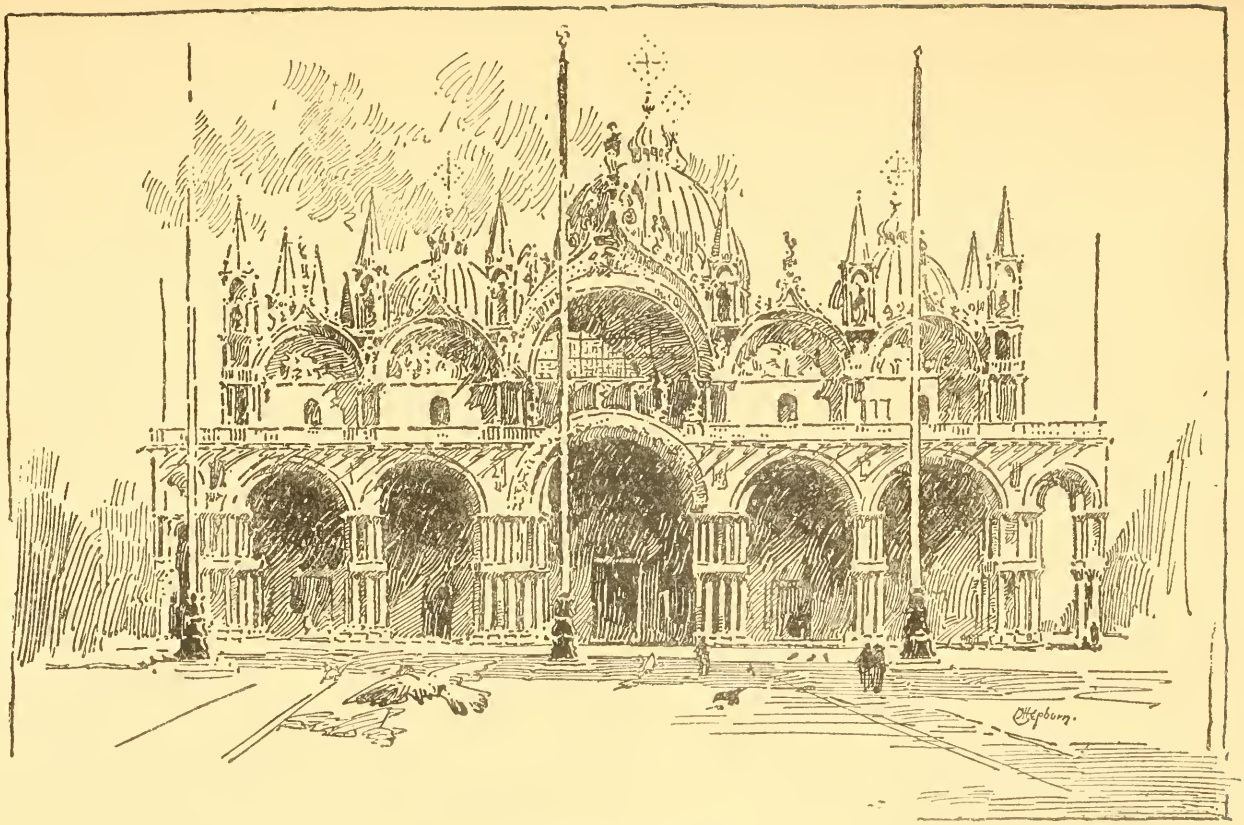
nople was for a time in the hands of the crusaders, they took these horses from the hippodrome and brought them to Venice. Napoleon carried them to Paris, but in 1815 they were taken back. The interior of Saint Mark, like that of all Byzantine buildings, is rich and brilliant. The walls are lined with rare marbles, and the floor is made of tessellated, or checkered, mosaic work.

The Moors and Saracens built many mosques and palaces. The most renowned of these is the wonderful Alhambra in Spain, which was erected in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Longfellow calls it an enchanted palace. Its courts and pavilions are marvelously beautiful. Some of its ceilings are inlaid with silver and ivory and mother of pearl and tortoise shell. Others, as well as its walls, are ornamented with most graceful stucco arabesques, or delicate tracings of plants and vines, half from nature and half conventional, but always exquisite. Here and there are quotations from the Koran; but the Arabic letters seem only a part of the ornamentation. The stucco was formerly brilliant with gold and color, and some portion of this still remains. Everywhere are columns and arches. One court is especially famous for its beauty; and it has been painted and described so many times that to thousands who have never been in Spain

it is almost as familiar as their own houses. This is called the Court of the Lions, because within it is a fountain of marble and alabaster in the shape of twelve lions surrounding a basin. The Koran, as has been said, forbade Mohammedans to copy animal life. Nevertheless, here are the lions.

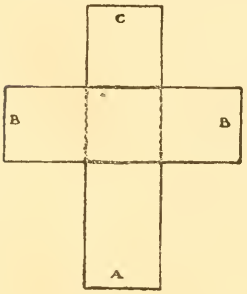
After the ninth century, a style of building became common which has received the name of Romanesque because it is somewhat like the old Roman fashion. The roof of the Romanesque church was vaulted, and therefore the walls had to be made thick and solid to support it. The number of windows was not large, and what there were gave little light because of the thickness of the wall. There were towers, but the building as a whole was rather low and wide, and even the towers could not give it grace. The church at Angoulême is Romanesque. It looks strong and sturdy, as if it belonged where it stands and meant to stay there, but it is not beautiful.

After the Romanesque style came the Gothic architecture; and this is generally the style meant when people speak of the architecture of the Middle Ages. Its special characteristic is a pointed rather than a rounded arch. Guesses without number have been made as to



ST. MARK'S, VENICE

what suggested the pointed arch. They have ranged all the way from Noah's ark to the lines made by the crossing of the branches of trees planted in rows. Gothic churches, such as the cathedral at Cologne, have pointed arches at doors and windows, and the pillars are in clusters instead of standing separately, as in the Roman and Greek architecture. The roofs are vaulted. Their weight tends to push the walls outward, especially as these are high and full of windows. Instead, however, of thickening the walls, as in the Romanesque style, the architects made outside supports called flying buttresses. In the Gothic churches there are many slender pinnacles, and there is a vast amount of carving. The general effect is of richness and splendor, while the many perpendicular lines give a certain lightness and grace which no other style of architecture can produce. The Gothic church is usually built in the shape of a cross, with a spire or tower at the place where the long and the short arms of the cross intersect. In the plan, *a* is the nave, *b* the transept, and *c* the choir. Within the choir was the chancel. The tower or towers rose at *a*. Here was hung the large bell, after being marked with

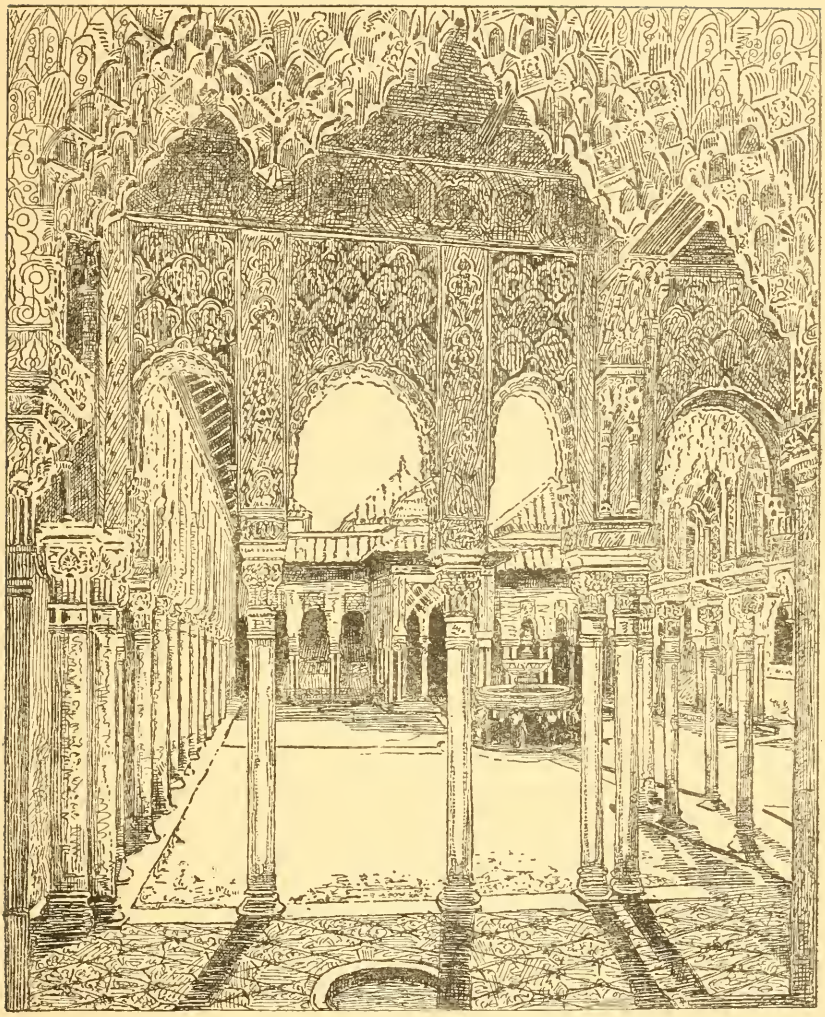


its name and the date, and after being christened with water and anointed with oil. Sometimes in places near the coast a church tower was provided with a *cresset*, or iron basket in which a signal fire might be kindled. At first, the Gothic architecture was used for churches only; but later castles, bridges, palaces, and gates of cities were built in this style.

In the centuries of the Middle Ages, the Church was the great power, not only in religious matters, but even in the decorative arts. Mosaics, painting, carving, embroidery, colored glass were all of use in beautifying the churches; and this fact was a great encouragement to their production. Mosaics were made by the Greeks in very early times, and from them the Italians learned the art. The "tessellated floors" of which we read in descriptions of churches and palaces were one variety of mosaic. The kind most used in Italy was made by taking slabs of white marble as a foundation. Grooves were cut into it, which were then filled with little cubes, or "tessellæ," of colored stone to form patterns. Of course in the Byzantine mosaic work one would expect much brilliancy and color. This was obtained by using bits of glass instead of stone. A sheet of gold leaf was laid between two sheets of glass and burned in a kiln. It was

then broken into bits, which served as a background for the figures or designs. These designs were made of differently colored glass or marble. The tiny pieces were firmly fixed in cement, and most elaborate pictures were the result. One of the most famous is called "Pliny's Doves." It represents four doves sitting on a metal basin, one of them stooping to drink. When altars and walls and pulpits gleamed and glittered with mosaic work in the dim light of some vast cathedral, the effect was far more rich than that produced by any other species of ornament.

Instead of covering church walls with mosaic, fresco was sometimes used, that is, painting in water color on damp plaster. This lasted well, because the colors sank into the plaster; but the drawing was stiff and the faces had little expression, until the coming of an artist named Cimabue, in the thirteenth century. The faces that he drew looked like those of real people with real thoughts and feelings. His draperies, too, were not prim and wooden, but hung as if they had been painted from real folds of cloth. It is said that when his famous "Madonna" was to be carried to the Church of Santa Maria Novella, the people formed in procession to do it honor, and shouted joyfully when the artist appeared among them. Cimabue



THE ALHAMBRA: THE COURT OF LIONS

one day noticed a shepherd boy drawing on a rock a picture of his sheep. It was so well done that the artist took the boy under his protection and taught him. This boy became the famous Giotto. The faces that he painted look as "real" as those of Cimabue; and he even painted portraits of living people and ventured to make them look like the people. It was Giotto who painted the portrait of Dante which has been handed down to us. The backgrounds, however, of Giotto's work, like those of other artists of the time, were not like nature. If there was a landscape, the trees were thin and rigid and not in the least like real, growing trees. Frequently the background was of gold. Indeed, to the artists of the time there could hardly be too much gold in a picture. To-day if an artist introduces a crown or a pair of gilded spurs, for instance, he tries to produce the effect of gold by the skillful use of lights and shadows; but the artist of mediæval times simply embossed real gold on the picture. This would hardly be called artistic, but it made a design brilliant and rich, a splendid piece of decoration.

Another famous painter was the monk Fra Angelico. He did not know that he was an artist, but in his leisure moments he covered some blank pages of a manuscript

with such dainty little miniatures that his brother monks were delighted. "Paint a picture," they urged, and he painted. By and by the Pope heard what he was doing, and sent for him to paint one of the chapels of the Vatican. It was so well done that the Pope wished to make him an archbishop in reward; but the monk refused the honor. He felt that God had given him a gift which it would be wrong to neglect for the sake of a high position, and he went back to his little cell to paint. He painted many diptychs and triptychs, or two-fold and three-fold tablets. These were often used as ornaments for the altar. The triptych especially was quite elaborate. It was a wooden panel often carved quaintly in Gothic designs, and shut in by two little doors. On the outside of the doors the artist painted pictures, frequently the portraits of the donor and his wife. On the inside there were pictures of saints or scenes from the Bible. The background of the figures is usually gold, still bright and gleaming after all the hundreds of years. Hawthorne says that if Fra Angelico's imagination had not been pure and holy, he could never have painted such saints, and that he must have said a prayer between every two touches of his brush.

The painting that was done on manuscripts was called

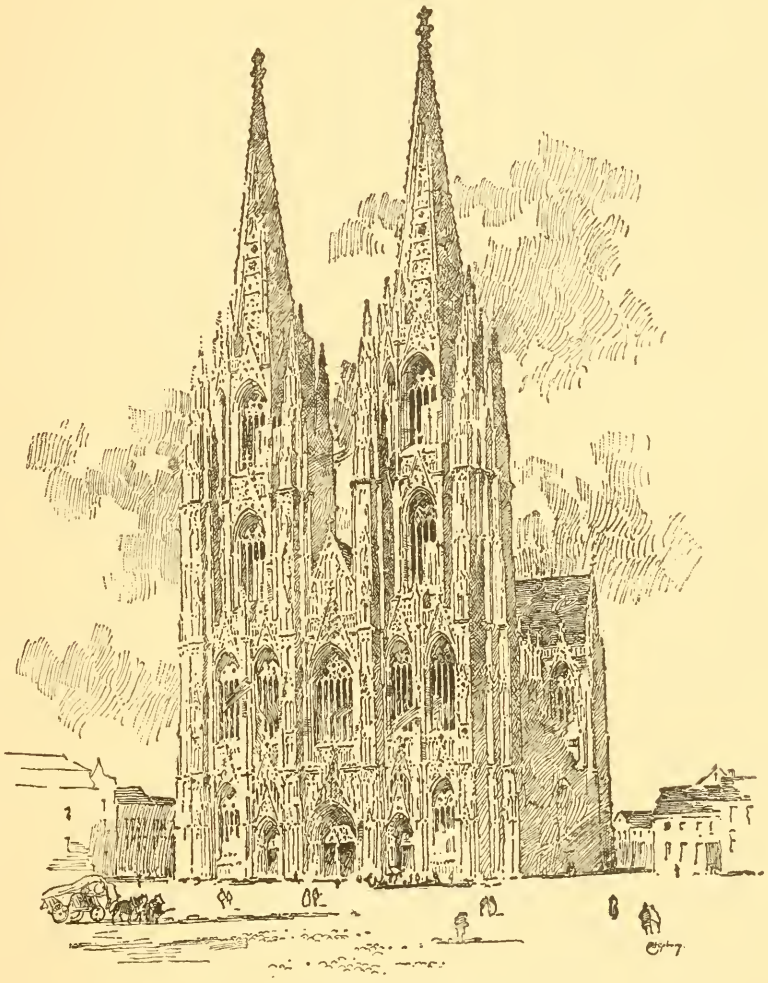
illuminating. At the beginning of the Middle Ages the parchment was sometimes dyed purple, and the whole book written in letters of gold or silver almost as regular as print. Of course such books as these were enormously expensive. In the thirteenth century, a finely written Bible was sold for enough to pay a workman's wages for twenty-six years. Of course not many books were as expensive as this, but they were all very costly. Most volumes were decorated, even those that cost no more than a house or two. The margin of the frontispiece was generally painted, and there were often borders to the pages and most elaborate initials, sometimes entwined with flowers and vines and sometimes showing pictures of saints or even of whole Bible scenes. No one thought of trying to find out how people dressed in Bible times, and therefore the illuminators simply copied the dress of their own day. Artistically, this was not very correct; but it is a great help in learning about the costumes of the Middle Ages. The reds and blues and greens in these illuminations are as fresh and bright as ever, and the gold looks as if it had been put on only an hour ago. Much expense went into the binding. The covers were sometimes of wood and sometimes of leather. They were ornamented with gold and silver

filigree work at the corners, or with heavy knobs of the precious metals. Often they were set with jewels. Sometimes the covers were of ivory, most delicately carved. If a man was fortunate enough to own a book, he was exceedingly careful to whom he gave the privilege of opening its clasps. As to lending it, that was not done as a matter of friendship by any means. The borrower must give ample security that he would return it uninjured. Even kings were not excepted. When Louis XI, king of France, wished to borrow of the faculty of medicine of the university of Paris the works of a certain Arabian physician, he was not only obliged to give valuable security, but he had to obtain a wealthy endorser just as if he were an ordinary man, and not the ruler of the land.

As the style of church building changed, the fashion of decorating churches changed also. The Gothic churches had many windows and few flat surfaces, and so they afforded little space for painting on the walls. But the windows were fine and lofty; and here was the best opportunity in the world for colored glass. Throughout the Middle Ages, the common way of making these windows was to prepare glass of the various colors needed, and then cut it into the shape of the object. If

a figure wore a red cloak, for instance, it was first sketched, then the red glass was cut into the shape of the cloak as it appeared in the picture, and this was fastened to the other pieces by a narrow strip of lead, so that the lead traced all the outlines of the picture. The shading and those parts of the design which were too small to be shown by separate bits of glass were painted with dark brown. The colors are sometimes brilliant and glowing, sometimes rich and dark.

Enamel was much used, with its soft gleam rather than with the flashing, glowing beauty of stained glass. To represent a figure in enamel work, the artist cut down into a plate of copper, leaving the outline of the figure of the full depth. Then into the shallow depressions of the figure he put a glassy substance in whatever color was needed and melted it in a furnace until it flowed and filled the whole depression. Then he polished the plate, and it was done. Later, artists used to make the whole figure in copper, finishing it with delicate lines of engraving, and using enamel for the background. Hanging lamps, altars, chalices, crosses, bells, and monstrances, and many articles of jewelry, such as clasps, chains, necklaces and bracelets were adorned with enamel.



COLOGNE CATHEDRAL

A vast amount of sculpture was used in the churches. In the Gothic architecture, especially in France, statues were everywhere. Including bas reliefs and scenes portrayed on the windows, the cathedral at Chartres is said to contain ten thousand figures. Besides the statues which were a part of the church and were used expressly to adorn it, there were recumbent memorial statues for tombs, which were at first stiff and unreal, but which came to represent with considerable truth the persons in whose honor they were made. In some places it was the custom to model statues in wood or wax as true to the original as possible and lay them upon the biers of wealthy people at their funerals. Little statuettes were often made in wood or ivory for ornaments. Reliquaries were frequently made in the shape of some saint with a tiny tabernacle to hold a relic. The whole tusk of the elephant was sometimes used in a carving, and the carvers made their figures lean back in a peculiar fashion to accommodate the curve of the tusk. People were very fond of bas reliefs. The tympanum, that is, the space between the top of the door and the angle of the roof, was often carved in relief to represent a whole story. On the capitals, or heads of the columns, and on the friezes men and animals were sculptured. Diptychs

and triptychs were made of ivory with minute carvings representing scenes in the life of Christ or of the Evangelists. This carving was sometimes picked out with color or with gilding.

In point of naturalness there was a vast difference between the Romanesque art and the Gothic. The Romanesque made a magnificent decoration; but it paid little attention to nature. The figures were wooden and unnatural, and the draperies stiff and rigid. Gothic art studied nature. The Gothic artists tried to make figures look like real persons, and to make the carved draperies hang as real draperies of cloth would hang. When they carved flowers and foliage, they studied those that were native to the place where the carving was to be and did their best to imitate them. In the Gothic cathedrals, this carving and painting was not wholly for beauty by any means. The work was done according to the orders of the clergy, and they never forgot that the church was the school of the common folk. That is why not only animals and plants, but scenes from the Bible and legends of saints were shown. There were carvings to represent the seasons, the arts and crafts, even stories introducing the virtues and vices in the form of persons. In the earlier times, in much of the Romanesque art, dragons and

griffins and monsters of all sorts appeared; but now these were seen only as gargoyles, that is, at the end of spouts which carried away water from the roof gutters.

The amount of gold and silver and jewels used in the churches was enormous. Not only the chalices and crosses and other furnishings of the altars were of gold, but often the altars themselves. In the church built in Constantinople by Constantine in the fourth century, there were numerous lifesize figures of silver, each weighing from ninety to one hundred and ten pounds. A canopy made of polished silver is said to have weighed two thousand pounds. In making the porphyry font, three thousand pounds of silver were used, and there were also columns of gold and an image of a lamb of solid gold. Figures of the saints often had precious stones for eyes. This same beautiful work was carried into cups and spoons and salt-cellars for royal households, and into jewelry for those who could afford to possess it. Most exquisite necklaces, clasps, bracelets, and châtelaines were made and loaded with rubies and emeralds and pearls. The English were famed for their remarkable gold and enamel work. An especially well known bit of it is the "jewel" of Alfred the Great, which he lost in the ninth century and which was found again in the seventeenth.

In the eighth century there was in France a famous Saint Eloy, a monk, who produced such wonderful articles in gold and silver that whole monasteries became his enthusiastic followers. To own a piece of his work was the glory of a church.

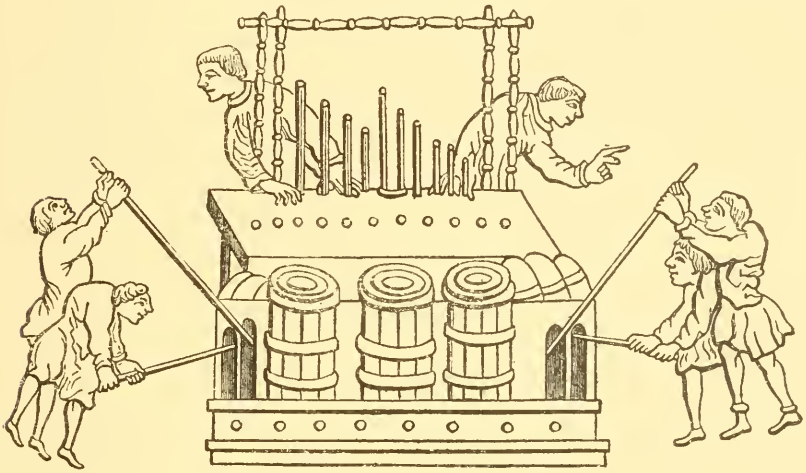
ST. ELOY

A great amount of embroidery was used in the churches for curtains, altar cloths, and vestments. The English were especially famed for this work also. They made most handsome vestments, stiff with embroidery and flashing with gold and jewels. In Lincoln Cathedral there were more than six hundred of such vestments, embroidered on silk or velvet or rare Eastern materials. In the thirteenth century, Henry III presented one of his bishops with a cope which was valued at nearly £20, a sum estimated to be worth about £300 to-day. Besides this rich embroidery, there was much tapestry. Tapestry is made in a loom, but it is not woven with a shuttle. The threads of the warp are fastened into place as in ordinary weaving; but instead of filling in the woof by throwing a shuttle across them, the tapestry

maker uses a needle and works in his designs with threads of different colors. Tapestry was used for curtains, canopies, table-covers, hangings of walls, bench-covers, and often for street decorations when important processions were to pass. The most famous piece of "tapestry," the Bayeux Tapestry, is in reality not tapestry at all, but embroidery. It is worked with wool upon a strip of brown linen nineteen inches wide and nearly two hundred and twelve feet long. It tells the story of the coming of William the Conqueror to England, and has pictures of his going on board ship, of his landing, of battles, and other scenes in his conquest, all worked with the needle. The pictures are rude, but they are clear, and they tell the story. To embroider well was looked upon as a great accomplishment in the time of William, quite proper for the fingers of a queen, and it is possible that William's wife, Matilda, and the maidens of her household worked together on this strip of cloth.

In the Middle Ages, as has been said before, there were many kinds of musical instruments, flutes, harps, drums, trumpets, pipes, and many others; but the one best suited to church music was the organ. An organ was presented to Charlemagne by Constantine, emperor

of the East, which was "small but mighty," for, according to the stories, it imitated the "roaring of the thunder, the accents of the lyre, and the clang of cymbals." For some time many bishops and priests objected to the thunderous rumbling; but organs made their way and



AN ORGAN

became big and magnificent. Some had pipes of silver and others of gold. The organists certainly needed to be trained athletes, for the key plates were five or six inches wide, and the player had to wear gloves heavily padded and strike the keys with the full force of his fists.

From the splendor of the churches the people went out into the plain, simple life of every day. It is no won-

der that whenever there was anything of the nature of a pageant, they enjoyed it with all their might. Most of these pageants took place to celebrate some royal marriage or the coronation of a sovereign. One of the most famous occurred in France toward the end of the fourteenth century, when Isabella of Bavaria entered Paris to become the queen of the French. She left the palace of Saint Denis in the morning. She was in a richly ornamented litter and was attended by her nobles and ladies in waiting. On either side of the way stood a body of some twelve hundred citizens of Paris, all on horseback and wearing handsome uniforms of crimson and green. A company of officers did their best to clear the way for the royal party, but "it seemed as if all the world had come thither," an old chronicler says.

At the first gate of Saint Denis the pageants began. There was a representation of a starry sky, and in this sky were children dressed as angels, who sang as the queen approached. This firmament must have been a little confusing, for in one part was an image of the Virgin Mary with the Holy Child in her arms playing with a windmill made of a large walnut, and in another were the arms of France and Bavaria, somewhat entangled in the rays of an exceedingly brilliant sun.

The next sight was a fountain which ran wine instead of water. It was decorated with fine blue cloth sprinkled with fleurs-de-lys. Handsomely dressed young girls stood around the fountain, singing most melodiously and offering wine in golden cups to all who would have it. Just beyond the fountain, a high stage had been built, and on this was represented a battle with the Saracens.

Now the queen had come to the second gate, and here was another representation of the firmament; but this time two angels descended from it and, singing sweetly, they gently placed upon her head a crown of gold rich with precious stones. A second scaffold was curtained and draped with tapestry, and on it were men playing on organs. The whole street was covered with a canopy of handsome camlet and silk. At Notre Dame Bridge there was a canopy of crimson and green made bright with stars. The street leading to the church was hung with tapestry to the very door. The procession had moved so slowly that it was now late in the evening; but the show was not over, for from the highest tower of Notre Dame a rope had been let down, and by this rope a man descended, bearing two lighted torches and playing various tricks on his way.

At the church door the Bishop of Paris and his clergy met the queen and led her through the nave and the choir to the altar. There she knelt and prayed, and then she lifted the crown from her head and gave it together with four cloths of gold to the Church. Another and richer crown was at once placed upon her head; then with an escort bearing five hundred lighted tapers she was carried back to her palace.

This was on Sunday. Monday the queen was solemnly anointed with the sacred oil. The king gave a grand banquet. He had provided several interesting devices, or dumb shows, but the hall was so crowded that hardly any one could see them, or even get anything to eat, for that matter, though a great plenty had been supplied. Tuesday there was a tournament wherein thirty knights, including the king, contended from three o'clock in the afternoon until night. Then came another splendid banquet, followed by dancing which lasted till sunrise. Wednesday and Thursday there were tilting and feasting, and Friday the guests made their farewells and went to their homes.

In all such pageants the people saw nothing irreverent in mingling religion and amusement. When the little nine-year old English king, Henry VI, had been

successful, by means of his generals, in his battles with Joan of Arc, his guardians decided that he should be crowned in Paris as king of the French; and at this celebration there was a hunting scene wherein a well-trained deer took refuge under the king's horse; there was a presentation of three large crimson hearts to indicate the love borne the king by his people; there was a big fountain of hippocras, a sort of spiced wine, wherein three mermaids were swimming; and there were also mystery plays acted in dumb show. At the coronation feast there were pageants of course. One was a lady with a peacock, another a lady with a swan, and a third was the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child.

When the little royal boy returned to England, he was received by gentlemen of Kent in red hoods, by mayors and corporations, by citizens in white with the insignia of their trade embroidered on their sleeves, and by aldermen in scarlet. At London Bridge a mighty giant with a drawn sword stood in the way; but he proved to be a kindly giant, and he made a speech declaring that he was ready to defy all the little king's enemies. Next followed a moral lecture in costume; for from a tower richly draped with silk there came forth three ladies dressed in white and gold and wear-

ing coronets. They said in rhyme that they were Nature, Grace, and Fortune, and that they had come to bestow upon him the best of gifts. Then appeared on the right seven young girls in white with blue baldrics, and on the left seven whose dresses were powdered with stars of gold. The first seven declared that they bestowed upon him sapience, intelligence, good counsel, strength, cunning, pity, and the fear of God. The others repeated the following verses: —

> God thee endowe with crowne of glorie;
> And with the sceptre of cleneness and pitie:
> And with a swearde of might and victorie;
> And with a mantell of prudence clad thou bee:
> A shield of faith, for to defende thee.
> An helme of health, wrought to thyne encrease,
> Girte with a girdell, of love and parfite peace.

After this they sang a roundelay, or "an heavenly melodie and song."

The next sight was a sort of tabernacle wherein sat Dame Sapience with her pupils — the trivium and the quadrivium — Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric, Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy. The little boy must have been tired when he reached "Paradise." This was a place made beautiful with green trees bearing oranges,

almonds, olives, pomegranates, dates, quinces, and peaches; and the small Henry could hardly have helped wishing that he was not a king, but just an everyday boy and could jump down and lie under the trees and pick the fruit which had been so skillfully fastened upon the branches. But there is no rest for kings, and he had to sit still and look interested while two elderly men preached a sermon to him in verse. At last the poor child reached his palace; and perhaps in his dreams he had the pleasure of forgetting that he was a sovereign.

Such were the people and the customs in the days when knights were bold. It was a time of contradictions, an extraordinary commingling of ignorance with an intense desire to learn, of courtesy and gentleness with utter recklessness of human life and suffering; of magnificence of dress and luxuriance of surroundings with revolting filth and wearisome discomfort; of keenness in argument and blindness in doing justice, of readiness to sin with equal readiness to endure extreme penance. The people of the Middle Ages studied by futile methods, their astronomy was founded upon a mistake, their chemistry upon a poetical fancy. Nevertheless, something closely akin to the change of one metal into another has already become an everyday matter in our

laboratories, and the dream of the alchemists may yet prove true in essence.

The Middle Ages lay between the civilization of the ancients and that of the printing press. It was a time of rapid changes, of swift and mighty transitions. Human life was insecure, the laws and their execution were often bitterly unjust; and yet there must have been hundreds of thousands of people who lived their lives quietly and contentedly, perhaps thinking with pity of those who dwelt in the land before them and with sympathy rather than envy of the condition of those who would follow them. "When one is contented, there is no more to be desired; and when there is no more to be desired, there is an end of it," declares the wisdom of Don Quixote. Possibly the good folk of the Middle Ages have after all no special need of our compassion.

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